

Weekend reading, listening and watching: India, engaging citizens, the media & disaster aid, life on Manus, and more

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In this weekend's audio- and visual-heavy edition, we have deliberately restrained ourselves from describing any link as 'interesting' or 'fascinating' - we wouldn't have included any link we didn't find interesting and fascinating! Hopefully you agree; but we're interested in hearing any feedback from readers.

India has experienced improved economic growth over the last two decades, prompting questions around what caused the growth and whether it can be sustained. Former Deputy Chairman of India's Planning Commission, Montek Singh Ahluwalia, focuses on the role of state institutions and reform in this [LSE public lecture](#).

Alternatively, for those who might prefer a visual perspective on India, check out this brilliant [short film](#) [15 mins] about the transnational used clothing trade, which highlights how the clothes provide the Indian women who process them with a unique lens onto Western life, and their own circumstances.

The subject of citizen engagement and empowerment is widely discussed in development. The World Bank and LSE have arguably taken the notion of engagement one step further by developing a MOOC (massive open online course) about citizen engagement, which was the subject of a recent [panel discussion](#). And if you're inspired by the talk, you can join thousands of fellow MOOC students [here](#).

Australia's late-breaking decision at the end of March to join the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank sparked another round of debate over the need for another development bank. Taking a critical view of US resistance to the concept of a Chinese-led bank, Ken Rogoff [argues](#) (free access but you need to register with Project Syndicate) that we should be less concerned with the AIIB's existence, and more with how and where it will choose to invest.

As the media coverage over Vanuatu's recovery from Tropical Cyclone Pam begins to wane, this [piece](#) by Vox is topical. It suggests that the amount of media coverage of a disaster can directly impact the allocation of government humanitarian aid. By contrast, this [research](#) [paywalled; but this [presentation](#) gives a reasonable summary] on aid from (US) NGOs found almost no evidence that NGOs allocate funding based on media coverage; rather NGO engagement tends, foremost, to be needs-based.

In February's *The Monthly*, Jo Chandler [reported](#) on life on Manus Island in the shadow of the Australian immigration detention centre. With Australia's detention and resettlement policies coming under increasing scrutiny, the piece provides important context of what is happening on the ground, illuminating how much is at stake for 'ordinary Manusians' and how little say they have over what happens on their island.

This [lecture](#) delivered by Henrietta Moore, the recently appointed Director of the new UCL Institute for Global Prosperity, merits a listen - provided you can bring yourself to click past the misleading title and blurb. While she does acknowledge 'post-development' arguments, her primary call is for development practitioners to pay increased attention to the intricacies of context and social life.

Finally, it's possible -- given that non-subscribers only have access to a certain number of free articles per week, and given that this isn't strictly development related -- that you might want to save your click for something else, but fans of [Serial](#) will almost certainly want to read [this](#) article by Ariel Levy in the New Yorker. The piece describes the case of John Restivo who was (almost certainly) wrongly convicted of murder, and who spent two decades in jail as a result. As well as telling the tale of a personal tragedy, the story captures a much larger injustice: just how hard parts of the US justice system resist admitting they got it wrong, and just how often those wronged are denied reasonable compensation.