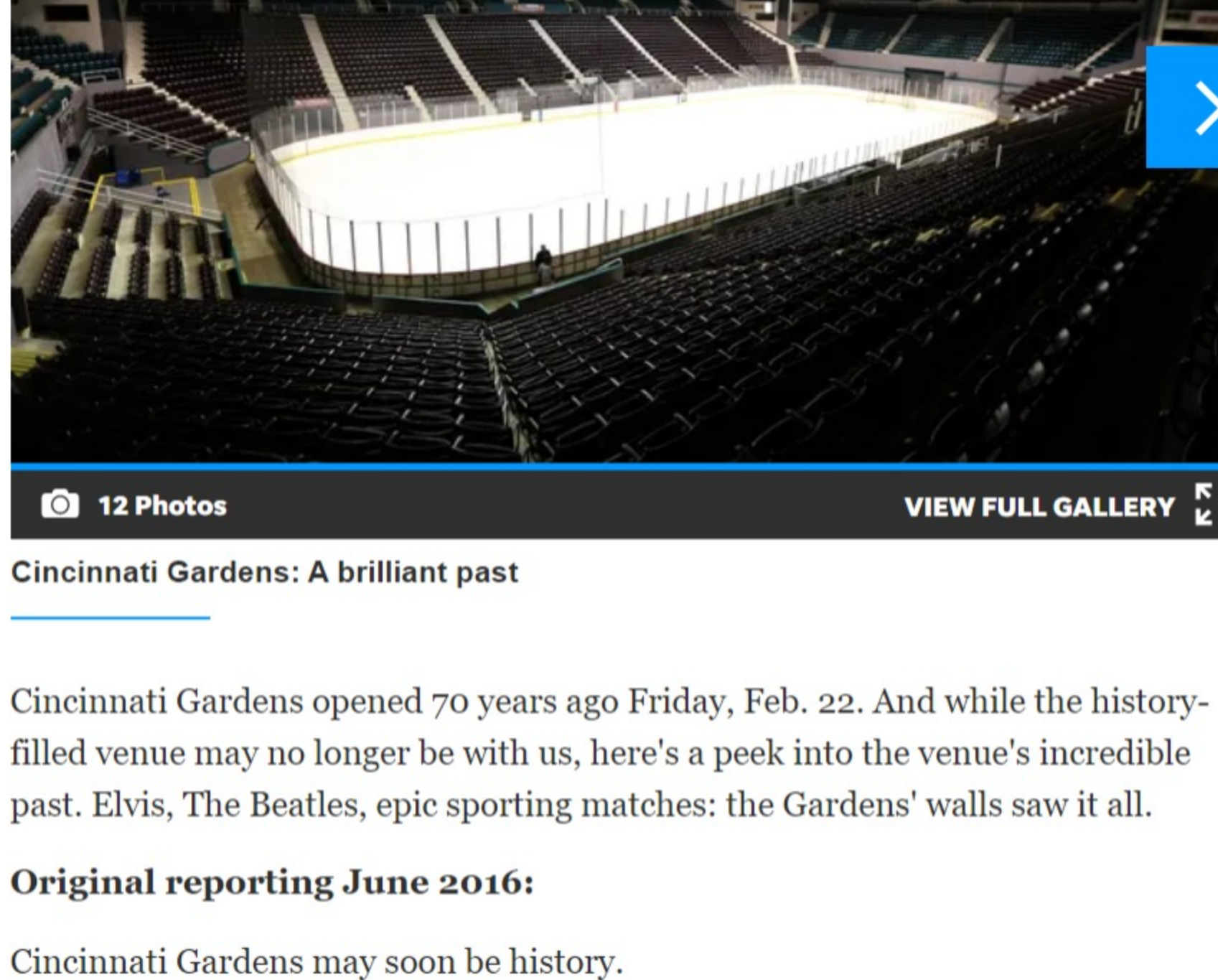


ENTERTAINMENT

Cincinnati Gardens opened 70 years ago: its storied history

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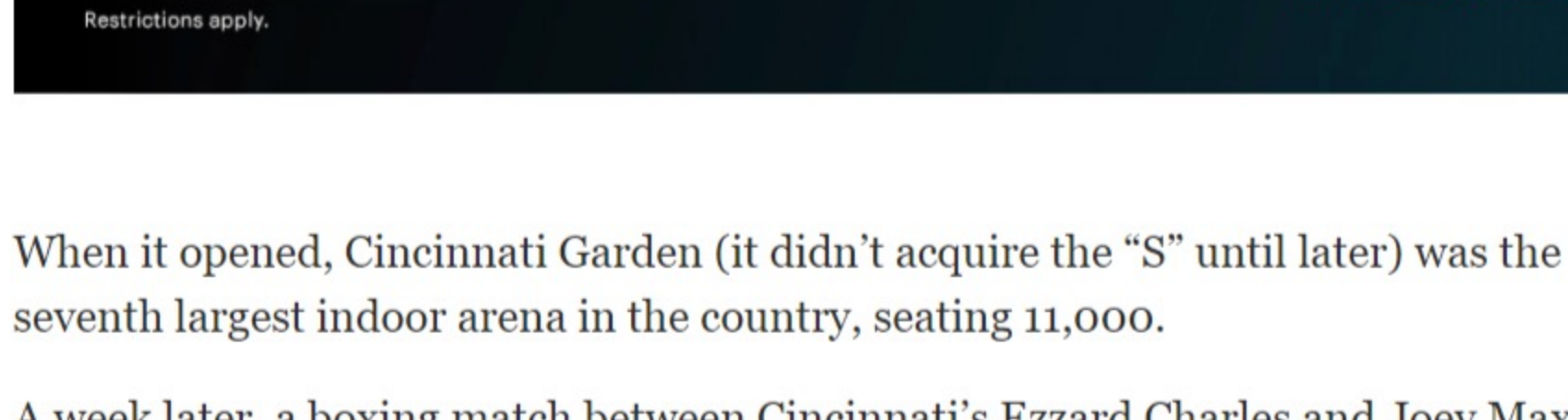
Cincinnati Gardens: A brilliant past

Cincinnati Gardens opened 70 years ago Friday, Feb. 22. And while the history-filled venue may no longer be with us, here's a peek into the venue's incredible past.

Original reporting June 2016: Cincinnati Gardens may soon be history. The Port of Greater Cincinnati Development Authority has contracted to buy the 67-year-old arena at Seymour Avenue and Langdon Farm Road in Roselawn for \$1.75 million...

Soon, the 25,000-square-foot brick arena may be nothing but a memory. But, oh, what memories were made there.

Opening night, Feb. 22, 1949, featured an exhibition hockey game between seed players for the Cincinnati Mohawks against the Montreal Canadiens.



When it opened, Cincinnati Garden (it didn't acquire the "S" until later) was the seventh largest indoor arena in the country, seating 11,000.

A week later, a boxing match between Cincinnati's Ezzard Charles and Joey Maxim drew 14,062 fans to watch them compete for a chance to challenge Joe Louis for the heavyweight title.



Cincinnati Gardens, as seen in 1975, has hosted the biggest names in sports and entertainment over the years.

That first year at the Gardens had college basketball, Ice Capades and Aqua Parade with "Flash Gordon" star Buster Crabbe.

The Gardens hasn't changed much. Designed for hockey, the \$3 million arena was modeled after the Maple Leaf Gardens in Toronto but without the dome.

You can still imagine what it was like to walk through those doors and watch Oscar Robertson score a triple-double for the Cincinnati Royals. Or catch a hockey game, or the Crosstown Shootout or the 1966 NBA All-Star Game.



There was more: Circuses, wrestling, and Evel Knievel launching his motorcycle over a line of cars. Jimi Hendrix in '68, the Jackson 5 in '70 and Madonna in '85.

Women swooned to catch a scarf from Elvis Presley at his first Cincinnati concert on Nov. 11, 1971, then again on June 27, 1973.

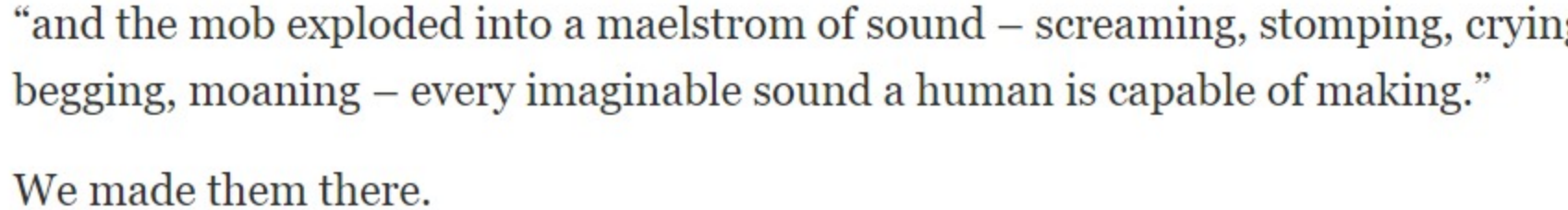
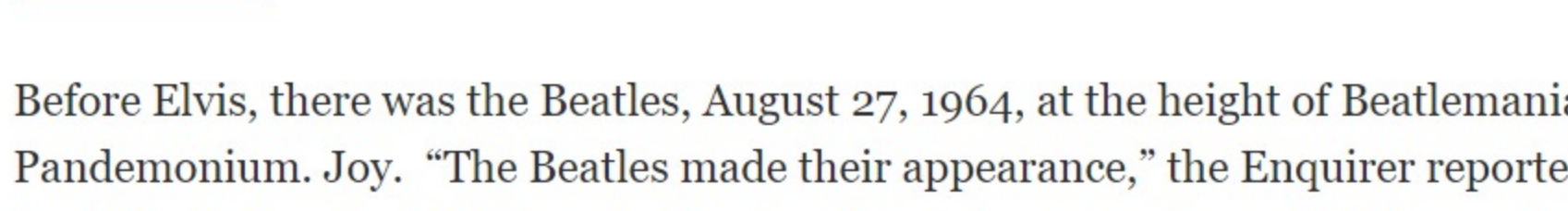
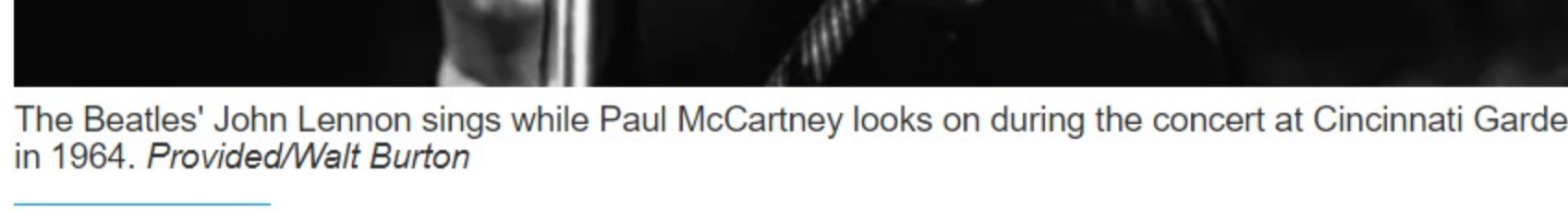
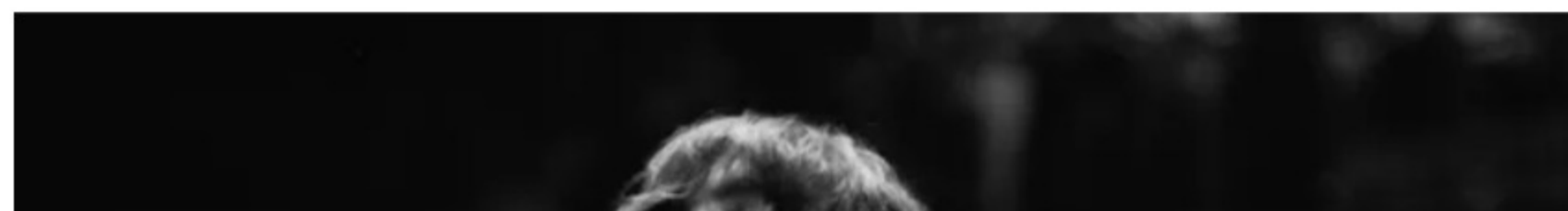
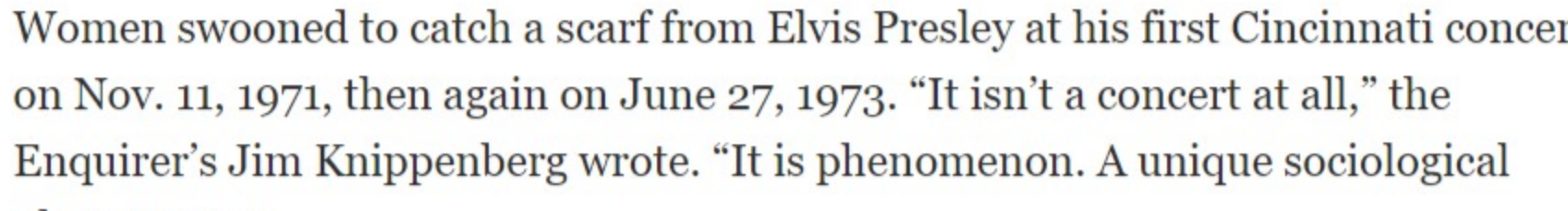
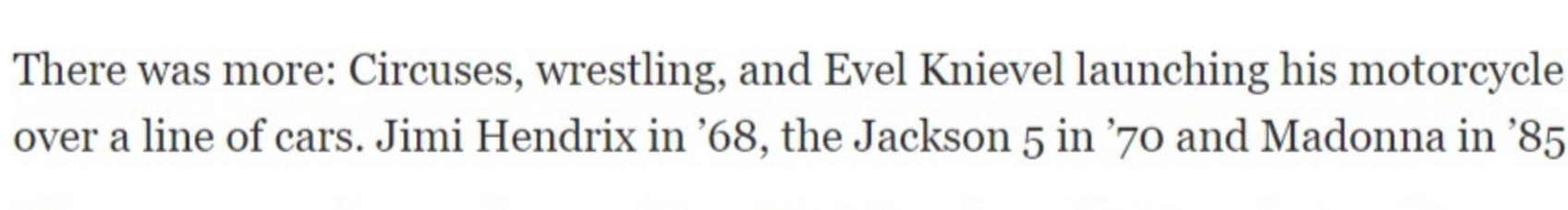
"Elvis at the Gardens."



The Beatles' John Lennon sings while Paul McCartney looks on during the concert at Cincinnati Gardens in 1964.

Before Elvis, there was the Beatles, August 27, 1964, at the height of Beatlemania. Pandemonium. Joy. "The Beatles made their appearance," the Enquirer reported, "and the mob exploded into a maelstrom of appearance - screaming, stomping, crying, begging, moaning - every imaginable sound a human is capable of making."

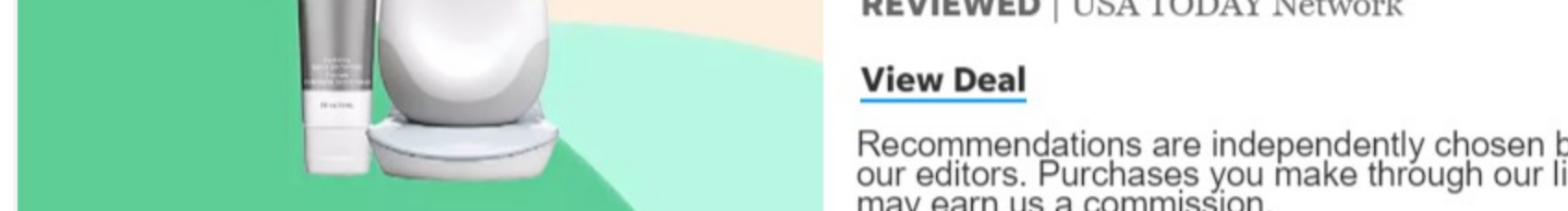
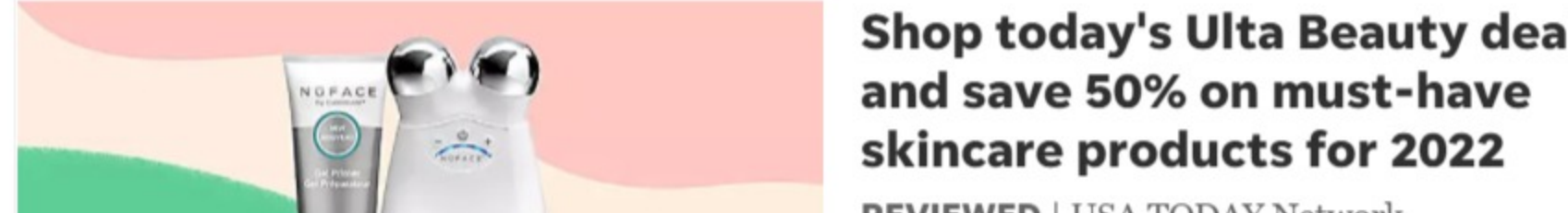
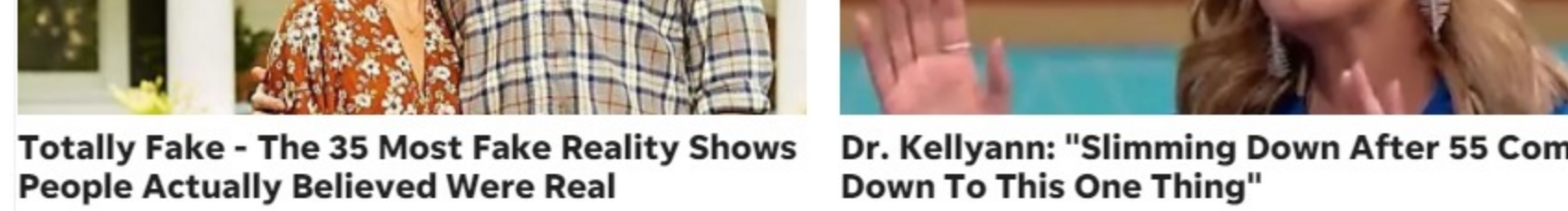
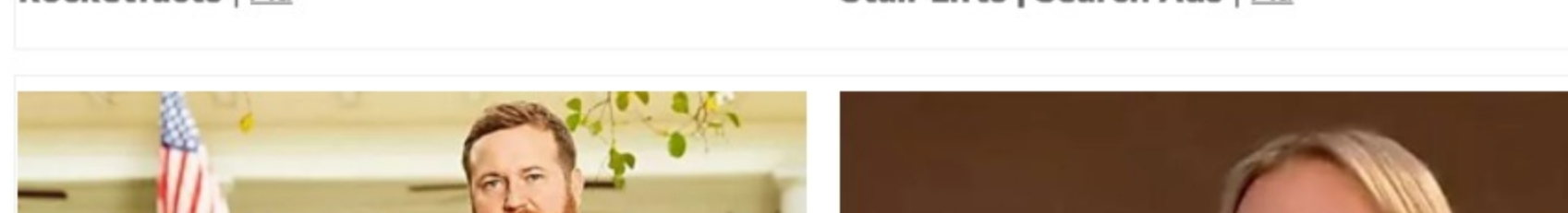
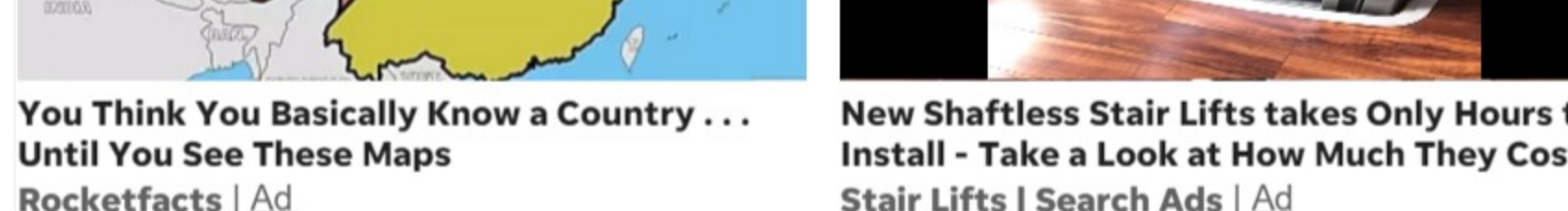
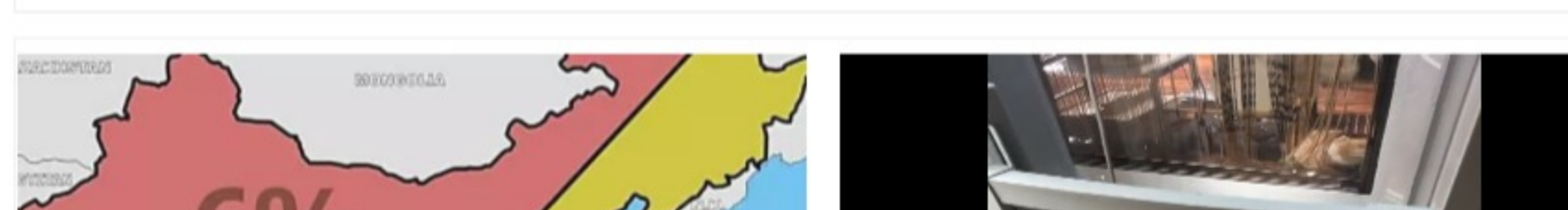
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