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Centre for Research and
Governance on Cyber Law

1 / 9

DO YOU KNOW?

**THAT 19 MINUTE VIRAL
VIDEO ISN'T JUST "GOSSIP"
— IT'S A CRIME TO SHARE.**

*A viral video is trending — but sharing it could
break the law.*



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THE VIRAL VIDEO CRISIS

- A 19-minute, 34-second video of a couple in compromising situations is spreading across Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, and X.
- While everyone's talking about it, few realize that watching, downloading, or sharing it can expose you to serious legal action. Before you click "share," know the law.



PRIVACY VIOLATION – YOUR FIRST LEGAL RISK 🚨

- **Section 66E of the IT Act, 2000** makes it illegal to publish or transmit images of a person's private area without their consent. **Punishment:** Up to 3 years imprisonment + ₹2 lakh fine.
- **Did the couple consent?** If the video was recorded without permission, sharing it compounds the crime. You become legally liable not just the creator.



OBSCENE CONTENT – MORE LEGAL TROUBLE ●

- **Section 67 (IT Act):** Publishing obscene material in digital form.
 - **Punishment:** First conviction – up to 3 years + ₹5 lakh fine. Subsequent – up to 5 years + ₹10 lakh.
- **Section 67A (IT Act):** Sexually explicit content brings harsher penalties – up to 5-7 years imprisonment for repeat offences.

Your WhatsApp forward? It counts.



CRIMINAL CODE VIOLATIONS

(BNS, 2023)

- **Section 294 BNS:** Sale/ distribution/ public display of obscene material – up to 3 years imprisonment and fine (higher for some cases).
- **Section 77 BNS:** Voyeurism – 1–3 years imprisonment for first offence; higher for repeat.
- **Section 356 BNS:** Defamation – civil/criminal liability for reputational harm.
- **Section 79 BNS:** Words/gestures insulting modesty of a woman – up to 3 years and fine.



SPECIAL PROTECTIONS – IF ANYONE IN THE VIDEO IS A MINOR 🧒⚠️

- The **Juvenile Justice Act, 2015** adds extra legal jeopardy if the video involves anyone under 18.
- Child sexual abuse material (CSAM) charges carry even stricter penalties—up to **7+ years imprisonment** and registration as a sex offender.

Don't assume. Don't share.



WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU SHARE IT?

- Platforms track shares through metadata and reports.
- Cybercrime units investigate complaints and trace sharers.
- Civil suits from the couple for emotional trauma, reputational harm.
- **Employment consequences:** Many employers treat this as misconduct.
- **Social stigma:** Digital footprints are permanent.



WHAT SHOULD YOU DO INSTEAD?

- **Don't watch.** Don't download. Don't forward.
- **Report** the video to Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, or X using their abuse reporting tools.
- **Educate others:** Tell friends why sharing is harmful—legally and ethically.
- **If you've already shared:** Delete the message.



YOU DECIDE – KNOWLEDGE IS POWER 🧠💪

Every share is a choice.

Every click has consequences—legal, emotional, and ethical. Before you decide to engage with such content, remember: protecting someone's dignity is also protecting yourself from the law.



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Empower Yourself— Know Your Digital Rights!

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