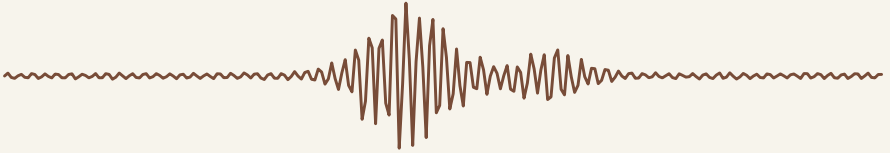


Is this video from today?

*How I checked an earthquake video, step by step, before
sharing it*



Ahmet Göker, CSINT Research
Free booklet, September 2026

Why this booklet?

After a big event, the first thing to reach most phones is a video, usually with “just now” written under it.

Late in the afternoon of 20 April 2026, a large earthquake struck off the northeast coast of Japan. By the next day a dashcam video was going round social media. In it power lines swing, the wall of a house falls and people stand still where they are. The posts said it showed that day’s earthquake.

In this booklet I check that video from the start. I used no special tools or paid databases, only pages anyone can open and a few searches. At each step I write down what I looked at, what I found and what I could not find.

What this booklet does not do

It does not look for the people who shared the video or expose their accounts. It only looks at when and where the video was filmed. Names and profile pictures are blacked out in the screenshots.

What happened on 20 April 2026?

First, pin down the real event. Before tying a video to an event, you need to know from an official source when and where that event happened. I re-read the values on 28 September 2026 from the USGS record and the Earthquake Research Committee’s report of 14 May.

Record	
Date and time	20 April 2026, 16:52 Japan time (07:52 UTC)
Place	Off the Sanriku coast, Pacific Ocean. USGS: 102 km ENE of Miyako
Magnitude	JMA: 7.7, depth 19 km. USGS: 7.4
Strongest shaking	5+ on the Japanese scale, Hashikami (Aomori)
Tsunami	Highest reading 79 cm, Kuji port (Iwate), provisional value
Casualties	No deaths reported. 10 injured, 2 seriously (as of 28 April)

1

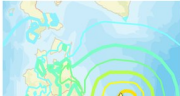
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M 7.4

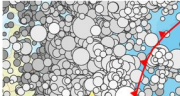
- 102 km ENE of Miyako, Japan

2026-04-20 07:52:58 (UTC) | 39.971°N 143.059°E | 25.0 km depth

Interactive Map



Regional Information



Felt Report - Tell Us!

0 0 0 1 3 6

Responses

Contribute to citizen science. Please tell us about your experience.

Did You Feel It?

VII

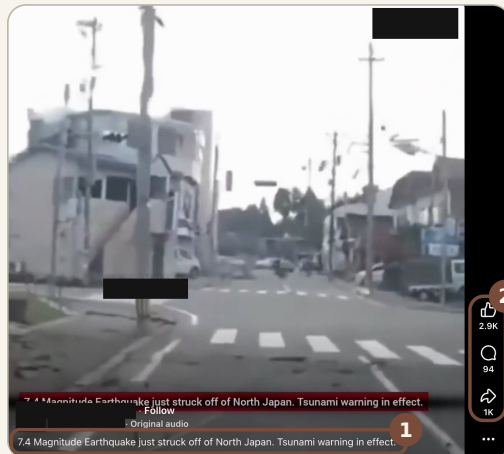


USGS event page, us6000sri7. 1: magnitude, 2: time. 07:52:58 UTC is 16:52:58 in Japan. News reports round it to 16:53. Screenshot taken on 28 September 2026. earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/eventpage/us6000sri7

What spread next?

Within two days of the earthquake, several different videos were shared as “Japan, just now”.

This booklet follows one of them, a short recording from the camera of a moving car. It shows the shaking, a wall collapsing and power lines swinging. It was shared on Facebook with this line: “7.4 Magnitude Earthquake just struck off of North Japan. Tsunami warning in effect.”



The Facebook post, a frame from the archive recording Fact Crescendo made on 22 April 2026. 1: the post text, 2: 2,900 likes and 1,000 shares. Page name, profile picture and logos blacked out. Screenshot taken on 28 September 2026. awesomescreenshot.com/video/51755254

What the post got right

The 7.4 is correct, USGS gives the same magnitude. A tsunami warning was really issued too. Only the video is wrong, and the correct details are what make the post convincing.

Step 1

Put the question in one sentence

Before checking anything I wrote down in one sentence what I was asking.

Was this video filmed during the 20 April 2026 earthquake?

I kept the question small on purpose. What the person sharing it intended, or how much damage the earthquake did, is outside it. I only look at when and where the video was filmed.

I also noted that the answer could be “yes”, “no” or “I don’t know”. If the evidence is not enough, writing “I don’t know” is a valid result.

Step 2

Look at the video itself

I set the caption aside and looked only at the picture. I asked:

Is there any writing? Signs, shop names, number plates, road markings. A place name makes the search much shorter.

What does the light say? Both earthquakes struck in the afternoon, Noto at 16:10 and Sanriku at 16:52. So light did not help here, and I wrote that down too.

Can you see the season? Snow, clothes, trees. January and April can look different, but that alone is not proof.

Is there sound? Phones and TVs in Japan play an earthquake alert. The sound and language of the alert is a clue. I could not make it out in the shared copy. The source I found later says the alert is heard in the original.

Step 3

Look for the oldest copy

The simplest way to tell how old a video is, is to find its oldest copy online. I searched a frame of the video in Bing Visual Search. The first result was a story about another earthquake, without this video. Second was the MBS NEWS video on YouTube. Google Lens asked for a robot check, which I did not pass.

The corner of the video names the place: 石川県・穴水町, Anamizu, Ishikawa, a small town on the Noto Peninsula. I also tried it the other way round. Searching YouTube for 穴水町 ドラレコ (Anamizu dashcam) brings up the same video first.



The video on the YouTube channel of Japanese broadcaster MBS NEWS. 1: published 11 January 2024, 2: the place name. Top left, 視聴者提供 says a viewer sent the footage in, MBS did not film it. Screenshot taken on 28 September 2026.
youtube.com/watch?v=6nar0ZwHrJc

The title reads: 【地震の瞬間】家の壁が崩れ…激しく揺れる電線 立ちすくむ人も 能登半島地震 石川・穴水町の様子【ドラレコ映像】

Roughly: “The moment of the earthquake. A house wall collapses, power lines shake violently, people stand frozen. Noto Peninsula earthquake, Anamizu, Ishikawa. Dashcam footage.”

Put the two earthquakes side by side

Now I had two events, and I wrote them into one table.

	The claim	The source found
Earthquake	Off Sanriku	Noto Peninsula
Date	20 April 2026, 16:52	1 January 2024, 16:10
Magnitude (JMA)	7.7	7.6
Where filmed	not stated	Anamizu, Ishikawa
Earliest record I have	22 April 2026, archive of the Facebook post	11 January 2024, MBS NEWS, YouTube

Two things decided it. The first is the date. The video was published more than two years before the earthquake it was said to show, and a video cannot go online before the event it recorded.

The second is the place. Anamizu is on Japan’s west coast, while the centre of the 20 April earthquake was off the east coast, about 615 km away. On that day the strongest shaking was measured in Aomori.

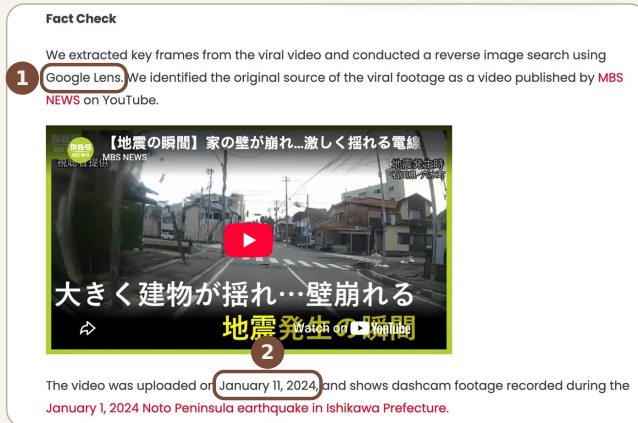
Why two reasons?

A single piece of evidence can mislead. When two separate routes lead to the same answer, I trust it more. Here the date and the place are independent, and both point to Noto.

Step 5

What did others find?

Only after finishing my own check did I read what fact-checkers wrote. I chose that order because I wanted to see my own result first.



Fact Crescendo's article of 22 April 2026. 1: the tool they used, 2: the upload date of the MBS recording. Screenshot taken on 28 September 2026.

srilanka.factcrescendo.com/english/japan-earthquake-viral-videos-not-2026

Fact Crescendo tied the same video to the MBS NEWS recording of 11 January 2024. Tempo reached the same answer on 27 April. AFP wrote that a four-part video shared on X on 21 April with a simplified Chinese caption, viewed more than 900,000 times, was also from January 2024. AAP showed that some tsunami footage was from 2011.

Fact-checkers reaching the same answer does not replace my own check, because they look at the same public records. I read their articles to compare with what I found.

Where I ended up

This video was not filmed during the 20 April 2026 earthquake. *It was recorded in the town of Anamizu, Ishikawa, during the Noto earthquake of 1 January 2024, and published by MBS NEWS on 11 January 2024.*

What the evidence shows	What it does not show
The oldest copy I found is from January 2024.	Whether the people sharing it knew.
The footage is from Anamizu, in the Noto earthquake.	That the 20 April earthquake caused no harm. Ten people were injured.
Date and place give the same answer.	That every frame of the video is unedited.

The right-hand column matters as much as the left. Showing that a video was tied to the wrong event does not show that anyone lied. Often someone shares it out of fear or good intent, and others carry on with the same line.

If you want to try it yourself

Next time a “just now” video reaches you, you can try these five steps. Each takes a few minutes.

1. Bring the question down to one sentence. What do you want to know?
2. Set the caption aside and look at the picture. Watch for writing, sound, light and season.
3. Take a few frames and run them through image search. If a place name comes up, search in that language too.
4. Find the record of the real event from an official source and write the two events side by side.
5. Write down what you know and what you do not know, separately.

Be kind when you correct

When you see a wrong post, sharing the source usually works better than calling someone out in public. “This video is from January 2024, here is the original” is enough.

Where I looked

1. USGS, M 7.4, 102 km ENE of Miyako, Japan, event us6000sri7.
earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/eventpage/us6000sri7
2. Headquarters for Earthquake Research Promotion (HERP), Earthquake Research Committee, evaluation of the earthquake off Sanriku on 20 April 2026, 14 May 2026. jishin.go.jp/main/oshirase/20260420_off_sanriku.html
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8. Geospatial Information Authority of Japan (GSI), the 2024 Noto Peninsula earthquake of 1 January, 16:10, M7.6.
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9. Fact Crescendo’s archive of the Facebook post, 22 April 2026.
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