STUDY NOTES · BASIC CONCEPT

What is “Digital Arrest”? And why is the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 the core cyber law in India?

Defence & Security

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What is Digital Arrest?

- Digital arrest is not a legal procedure. It is a cyber fraud technique used by scammers to psychologically trap victims by making them believe they have been arrested through phone or video calls.

How it works:

- Fraudsters impersonate CBI, ED, police, or court officials
- They accuse victims of serious crimes like money laundering or illegal transactions
- Victims are kept under constant video-call surveillance
- They are warned not to contact family or lawyers
- Money is extorted through fear and intimidation

Key fact:

- No government agency in India arrests or collects fines through phone or video calls.

Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 – The Core Cyber Crime Law

- The IT Act, 2000 is India’s primary legislation that defines, regulates, and penalises cyber crimes while providing legal recognition to electronic records and digital transactions.

Key objectives:

- Prevent and punish cyber crimes
- Give legal validity to electronic records and digital signatures
- Protect citizens from online fraud, identity theft, and data misuse

Relevant sections for Digital Arrest fraud:

- Section 66D – Cheating by personation using computer resources
- Section 66C – Identity theft

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- Sections 43 & 66 – Unauthorised access and misuse of computer systems

Punishments:

- Heavy fines
- Imprisonment (up to 3–10 years depending on the offence)

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