

Air India announces second VRS offer

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Air India on Friday made another voluntary retirement (VRS) offer for its non-flying employees. This is the second such offer by Tata Group after taking control of the loss-making national airline in January last year, reported by PTI.

According to the report, the latest offer will be available for permanent general cadre officers who have attained the age of 40 years or above and completed a minimum of five years of continuous service at the airline, according to a communication. Also, clerical and unskilled categories of employees who completed a minimum of five years of continuous service will be eligible.

The VRS offer will be open till April 30. Sources said that a total of around 2,100 employees will be eligible to avail the latest voluntary retirement offer. Currently, the airline has a staff strength of about 11,000 people, including flying and non-flying staff.

In June 2022, Air India launched the first phase of the voluntary retirement offer.

There has been a request from employees for extending the additional benefit of voluntary retirement to other permanent employees as well. In response to this, Air India is announcing the second phase of the voluntary retirement offer, the airline's Chief Human Resources Suresh Dutt Tripathi said in the communication sent out to

the staff on Friday.

"The employees who apply for voluntary retirement from March 17, 2023 to April 30, 2023 will also be provided with an ex-gratia amount as a one-time benefit. Eligible employees who apply up to 31st March 2023 will receive Rs 1 lakh over and above the ex-gratia amount," the communication said.

In the first phase of the voluntary retirement offer, both flying and non-flying staff were covered. At that time, around 4,200 employees were eligible and out of them, around 1,500 people opted for the offer, the sources said. According to Air India, the cabin crew, who will be recruited from around the country, will undergo a 15-week training programme which will include extensive classroom and in-flight training at the airline's training facility in Mumbai as well as familiarisation flight.

In September last year, Air India announced the transformation plan Vihaan.AI which focuses on various goals to be achieved over a five-year period. The plan is aimed at putting Air India on a path of sustained growth, profitability and market leadership.

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