The Baikal Gigaton Volume Detector is a neutrino telescope in the Siberian Lake Baikal. In its first phase to be completed in 2021, it will comprise 8 clusters of each 288 optical modules (OMS) at depth between  and  meters. The OMs house light sensors which record the feeble light signals generated in neutrino interactions. Three clusters have been installed in previous seasons, using the winter ice as a deployment platform. During this year's Baikal winter campaign, two new clusters have been deployed and connected to shore by two new cables.

The work on ice was finished at April 7. During the next two weeks, the operation parameters of the array system were set and tuned. All five clusters are now synchronized between each other by both White Rabbit and an alternative system. Calibration runs with LEDs and lasers were performed on all five clusters. Data taking of the full array started at April 10. An improved acoustic positioning system was also tested and is operated since April 10.

GVD now comprises 1440 OMs. All 576 OMs of the two new clusters are operating. There are only 27 dead OMs (about 2% of total number); they all belong to the first (20) and second (7) cluster. Average data rates are about 60-80 Hz on all clusters.

The following pictures illustrate the deployment operations and the end of the expedition, with a happy Baikal crew. Almost 60 physicists, engineers, craftsmen, technicians and students have worked at the Lake and made this campaign a success. Not to forget the diver who caught the rope at the upper boy of already deployed clusters and pulled it to the surface so that equipment to be repaired could be hauled up.

The results of the expedition were reported in online diaries, with many beautiful pictures (http://dlnp.jinr.ru/ru/bajkalskij-dnevnik/bajkalskij-dnevnik-dmitriya-naumova) and, for the first time, with a professionally arranged video coverage and interviews with many participants of the expedition.

Left: the ice camp, seen from a drone. Right: An optical module (OM) is clamped to the carrying rope
Left: Work under one of the winches. Right: one of the high-power lasers for inter-string calibration

An old tradition: before the rope connected to the last cluster is released and sinks down to the upper buoys in 30 m depth, a liquid sacrifice is offered to Burkhan, the godhood of Lake Baikal: Everybody drinks a (small) mouthful of Vodka and pours the last drop to the Lake.

The very last seconds before the rope is released
A proud and happy crew

Sketch of the 5 clusters. The last two clusters #4 and #5 are in red. The single circles between the clusters mark the positions of the calibration lasers.