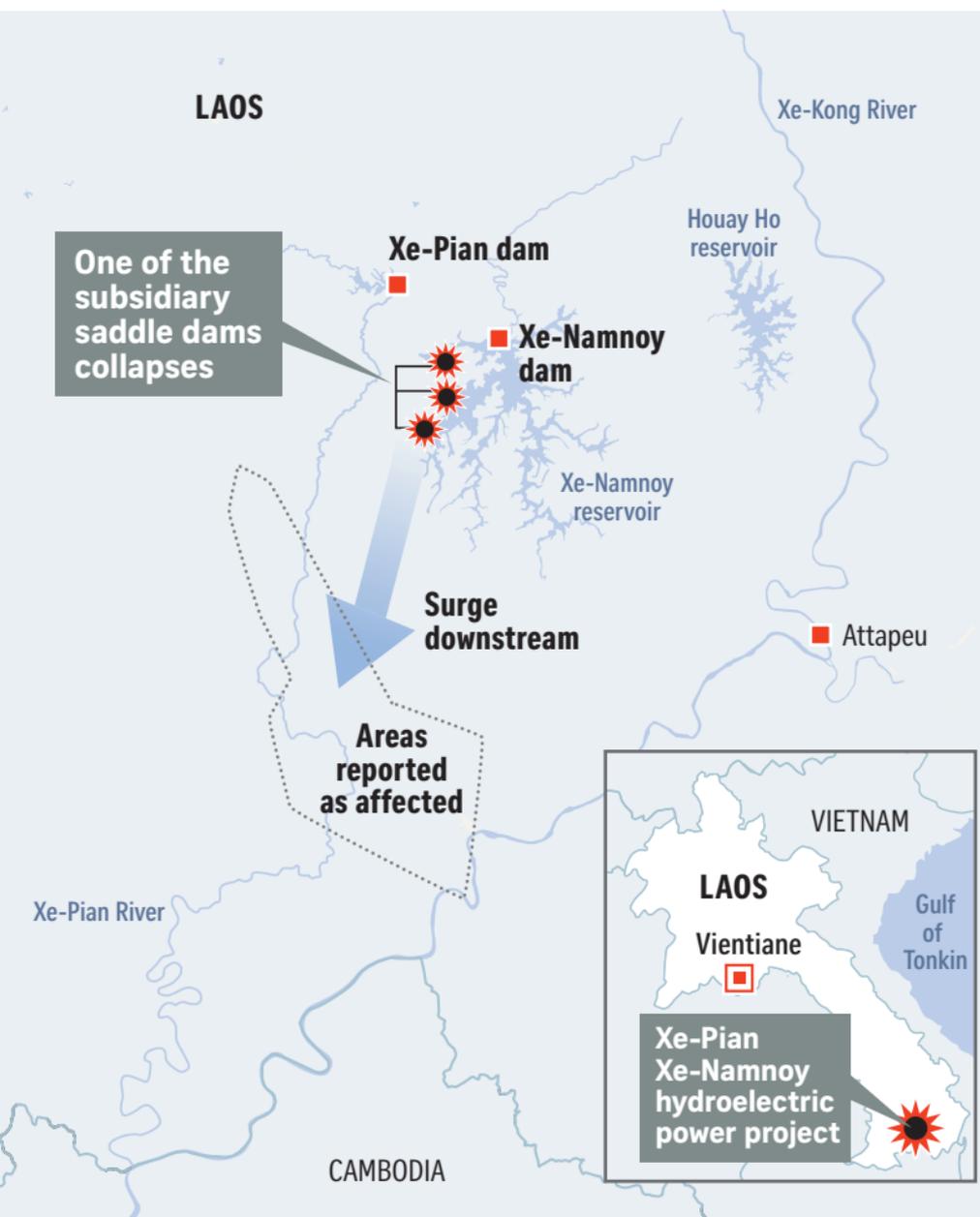


How it happened

Rescuers are searching for hundreds of people missing after floodwaters from a collapsed Laos dam surged through villages downstream, killing several people as homes were swept away.

THE DAM

Described by one of the project partners as Saddle Dam D which is 8m wide, 770m long and 16m high. The subsidiary dam was built as part of water diversion around the main Xe-Namnoy storage reservoir.



THE PROJECT

The US\$1 billion (S\$1.36 billion) Xe-Pian Xe-Namnoy hydroelectric power project comprises two main dams and five support dams. The investors include Laotian, Thai and South Korean firms, including SK Engineering & Construction and Ratchaburi Electricity Generating Holding (Ratch).

WHAT HAPPENED

Thai partner Ratch said the incident happened after continuous heavy rain caused a large amount of water to flow into the reservoir.

In a separate statement, South Korean partner SK Engineering said it discovered at around 9pm local time on Sunday that the upper part of the saddle dam had washed away. The firm said it immediately alerted the authorities and began evacuating villagers downstream.

Monday 03:00

Water is discharged from one of the main dams (Xe-Namnoy dam) to try to lower water levels in the subsidiary dam.

Monday 12:00

The state government orders villagers downstream to evacuate after learning that there could be further damage to the dam.

Monday 18:00

More damage is confirmed at the dam.

Tuesday 01:30

A village near the subsidiary dam is flooded.

Tuesday 09:30

Seven villages are flooded.