# MUSIC NEPAL'S LANDMARK POST-PRODUCTION COMPLEX: INSIDE NEPAL'S FIRST DOLBY ATMOS FILM MIX STAGE

*__PALM Expo Magazine__ brings you an in-depth look at a pivotal moment for South Asia's film sound. In this feature, __Daman Sood__, Co-founder, __Sound Team__, and __Santosh Sharma__, Founder & Chairman, __Music Nepal__, explore Nepal's long-standing need for professional soundtrack mixing—often felt, but rarely discussed. That gap has now been decisively addressed with the launch of the country's first __Dolby Atmos Film Mix Stage__, designed and executed by Daman Sood for Music Nepal. Opened in January 2026, the Kathmandu-based facility marks a major leap not just for Nepali cinema, but for the wider region, setting a new benchmark for calibrated, world-class post-production. This is not merely an upgrade in technology, but a structural reset for how Nepali films are heard.*

## From Nepal's First Private Studio to Dolby Atmos

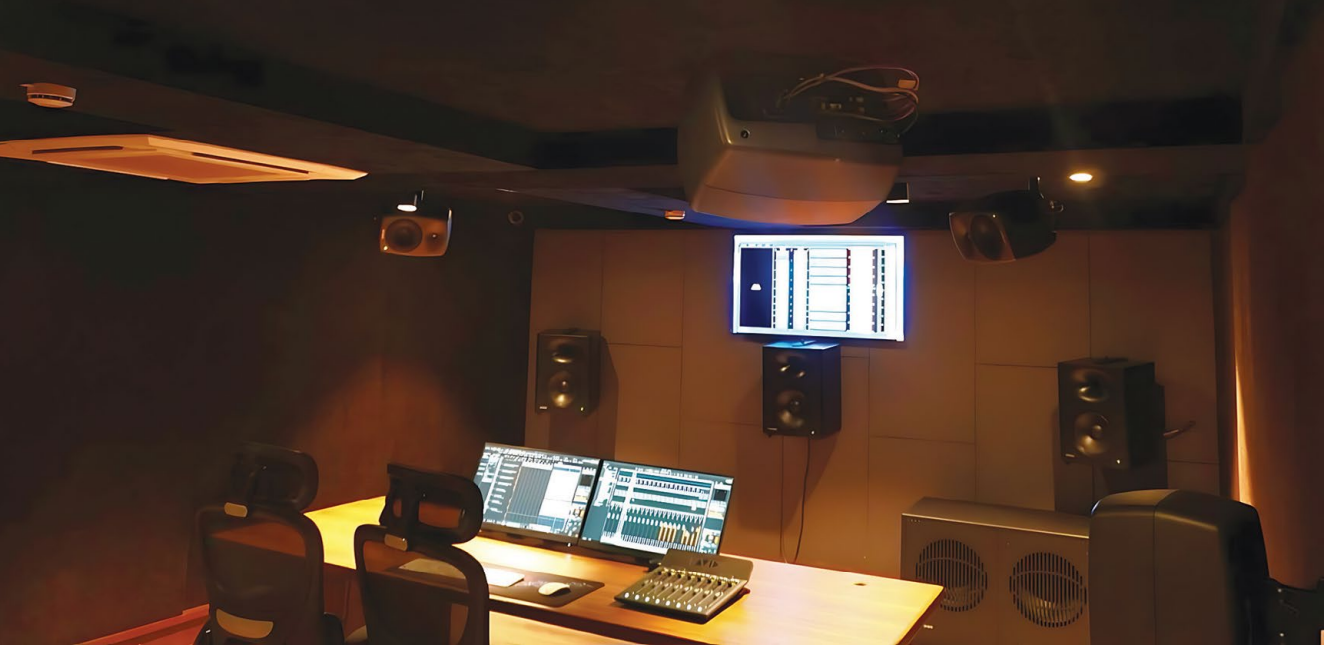
The project has its roots in a professional association stretching back more than three decades. In 1991, Mumbai-based sound engineer **Daman Sood** designed Music Nepal's original recording studio — which at the time became Nepal's first privately owned professional recording facility. The relationship between the two principals never faded, and when Sharma began researching **Dolby Atmos** seriously, it was Sood he turned to.

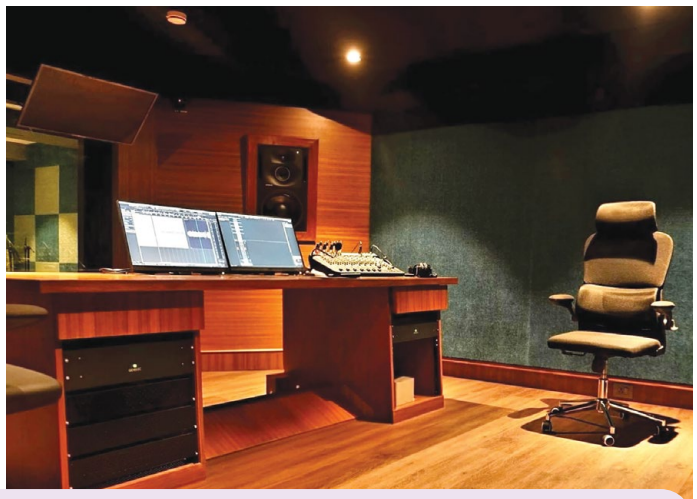
Sood brings formidable credentials to any project of this nature. With 56 years in the recording industry and more than 150 studios designed and built across India and Nepal, his portfolio spans blockbuster Bollywood film recordings, private albums, radio and television commercials, and some of the most technically demanding studio environments in South Asia. His company, **Sound Team** in Mumbai, supplies professional audio equipment from globally recognised manufacturers, and he teaches recording arts alongside his consultancy work. His previous credits include senior consultancy on the **Yash Raj Studios** complex, completed in 2006 — a benchmark facility that set the standard for Indian film post-production.

When exploratory conversations between Sharma and Sood turned to the possibility of a **Dolby Atmos Film Mix Stage** in Kathmandu, what began as an idea quickly became a feasibility discussion. A visit by Sharma to Mumbai in late July 2023, specifically to **S and V Studio**, a Dolby Atmos film mix facility Sood had designed and built — proved to be the project's turning point. The technical precision of Dolby Atmos as a system, Sharma concluded, was precisely what Nepali cinema needed: defined loudness standards, precise monitoring requirements, and Dolby International certification that theatres could trust.

## Dolby Approved from Layout to Listening Geometry

From the outset, a key architectural decision shaped the entire project. Rather than retrofitting an existing structure, the Dolby Atmos Film Mix Stage





**Purpose-built construction enables precise control of isolation, room geometry, floating floors and HVAC performance, supporting a Dolby-approved JBL immersive monitoring system—fully aligned, tested and certified for professional Dolby Atmos film mixing in Kathmandu, as seen in the Machapuchre Premix Room, Danphe Mixing Room and Dhaulagiri Control Room**

was constructed as a completely separate, purpose-built building within Music Nepal's compound. This was not simply a logistical preference, Dolby's own technical requirements for isolation, room geometry, floating floor construction, and air conditioning systems demanded an approach unconstrained by pre-existing structural limitations.

Dolby's Asia engineering team were involved in the technical planning process throughout, and by July 2024, the studio design and layout had received formal Dolby approval. Construction of the main structure was completed by the end of October 2025, at which point the critical second phase began: acoustic treatment, isolation systems, and all interior finishing work that would ultimately determine the room's performance.

This phase was led by **Bhola Nath Vishwokarma**, a master craftsman whose team has delivered acoustic interiors for some of the most prominent studios in India, including those built for Yash Raj Studios, **A. R. Rahman**, and **Prime Focus**. With specialist fabricators unavailable locally, the team constructed and finished elements on-site in Kathmandu, a significant logistical undertaking. Materials were sourced both locally and from Mumbai, with Sood present at key stages throughout the build to oversee design execution.

The result is a room that has been fully tested, aligned, and certified by Dolby. Music Nepal's Atmos Film Mix Stage now appears on the Dolby Global Studios directory, certifying that it meets Dolby's performance requirements for professional film mixing. Speaker selection — **JBL models** approved by Dolby for the application — contributes to a monitoring environment described as a state-of-the-art film mix room, complemented by specialised seating manufactured in Mumbai.

## From Single Room to Integrated Post-Production Facility

What began as a plan for a single mix stage evolved considerably in scope as the project progressed. Recognising that a standalone Atmos room — however technically accomplished — would address only part of Nepal's post-production gap, the vision was expanded to create a full-service facility where producers can arrive with shooting rushes and leave with a finished film.

The completed complex is now home to a comprehensive suite of capabilities. Alongside the flagship Dolby Atmos Film Mix Stage, a separate building houses a 7.1 mix room with Atmos capability for OTT and web series content, monitored via a high-specification **Genelec** system calibrated by Sound Team engineers. A dedicated music studio, equipped with Genelec main monitors and near-field speakers — also precision-aligned — features an **SSL mixing console** alongside **Mojave** and **AKG** microphones, making it suitable for music production at a professional level. Two editing suites and a colour correction room complete the post-production chain, ensuring that the facility can support both large-scale film projects and smaller screen content end-to-end.

Additional spaces include a lounge for artists and a multipurpose room fitted with appropriate acoustics for discussions, client presentations, and podcast recording. The expansion from the original scope saw the project budget grow from an initial INR 3 crore to approximately INR 6 crore — investment that reflects a deliberate commitment to long-term capacity building rather than minimum viable infrastructure.

The facility's service offering spans the full range of contemporary audio post-production disciplines: Dolby Atmos film mixing, music production, dubbing, foley, and track laying for OTT and web series content. Nepali film producers now have access to internationally certified mixing capabilities without the expense, time, and logistical complexity of travelling to Mumbai — and, critically, can return for revisions and corrections without leaving the country.

## Blending International Training with Local Industry Context

Behind the technology is a team built with professional development in mind. The facility's engineering staff includes **Sarthak Tale**, trained in Mumbai, while department head Iman **Bikram Saha** brings experience from training in the United States and is a practising musician in his own right.

The broader Music Nepal complex also encompasses **Nepal Film Campus** and **Nepal Sangeet Vidyalaya**, teaching filmmaking and music respectively — a parallel investment in developing the next generation of Nepali audio and film professionals who will ultimately populate the industry this facility is designed to serve.

## From Capability to Credibility: Certified Rooms That Cinemas Can Trust

The inauguration of the Music Nepal complex in January 2026 — attended by Sood, Dolby's representative **Umesh Radhakrishnan**, and freelance engineer **Bharat Reddy** — marks a tangible shift in what is possible for Nepali cinema. For the first time, a film produced in Nepal can be mixed to internationally certified standards, in a room that theatres can trust, without leaving Kathmandu.

That may sound like an incremental gain. In practice, for an industry whose films have spent years being played back quieter than their peers by cinema owners who simply could not be sure the mix would hold, it is transformative.