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Virtual platform to solve real problems

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There are some people who want to ban a community networking site like Orkut and there are others who use the virtual platform to solve problems of the real world.

Work for underprivileged students will suffer if the networking site is banned, feel members of an NGO, which has its origins in Orkut.

Esho Kichu Kori, the NGO, started as a virtual community on Orkut on June 30, 2006.

The Orkut site of the NGO. Picture by Bishwarup Dutta

“Our community started as an effort of different but like-minded people, who met through Orkut and wanted to try and do something for needy students,” said Abira Ghosh, member of the community since the day of its inception.

Fifteen days after the formation of their community, the members met for the first time on the steps of Madhusudan Mancha to give a shape to what was till then just a concept and a bunch of ideas, said Ghosh.

All those unable to make it were updated about the proceedings through Orkut, as the group went on to realise their virtual dreams in the real world.

“Even now, after having a website of our own, most of our communication is maintained through Orkut,” said a member of the NGO. It currently has 1081 members listed on its Orkut page.

“Some of our members being non-resident Bengalis, Orkut is the best medium to keep people informed as to what is happening and to preserve our networking,” he added.

After spending eight months in the virtual world, the members of the community got themselves registered under the Society Registration Act on February 15, 2007.

The 11-month-old initiative is all set to take up its first project, called Medha, said Ghosh. “We have shortlisted 15 needy students who have passed Madhyamik. We will give them books and stationery items for their studies,” she said.

The NGO is also in the process of sponsoring the entire course fees of a student from the engineering stream and another from the medical stream, said Ghosh.

