

Anne Frank's diary added to UNESCO register

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Dutch Minister of Education Ronald Plasterk looks at a facsimile of Anne Frank's diary after a news conference in Amsterdam.

Photograph by: Cris Toala Olivares, Reuters

PARIS - The Diary of Anne Frank is among 35 items considered to be of exceptional documentary heritage added to UNESCO's Memory of the World Register this year, the United Nations agency said Thursday.

The latest additions bring the total number of entries on the register to 193. The list was started in 1997 by the Paris-based United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation to identify and preserve documentary heritage of world significance.

The Diary of Anne Frank tells of the daily life of an adolescent Jewish girl in the Netherlands during World War II. It describes her life in hiding from the Nazis, before she and her family were betrayed and deported. She died in a concentration camp in 1945. Her diary is one of the "top 10 most read books worldwide," UNESCO said.

Among the other items added to the register this year are documents relating to the reforms and policies of King Chulalongkorn of Siam, now Thailand, between 1868 and 1910 as well as the royal archives of Madagascar. The documents, which cover the period 1824-1897, represent "a key element in the foundation of the country's identity," UNESCO said.

Also chosen this year are photographs and films documenting the work of UNRWA, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees, and the Registry of Slaves of the British Caribbean 1817-1834, drawn up to help control the illegal import of slaves.

The various works are chosen by a committee of experts that meets every two years to preserve "documentary heritage that reflects the diversity of languages, peoples and cultures" and "guard against collective amnesia."

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