

Adieu, PJ

B/W-PATTERSON, P.I.

PJ Patterson, Jamaica's longest serving prime minister, in 2006 relinquished the leadership of the ruling People's National Party (PNP) in 2006, making way for a new leader.

Patterson, a lawyer by profession, became PNP president in 1992, when former prime minister Michael Manley retired due to ill health. At a special delegates conference of the PNP in 1992, Patterson defeated Portia Simpson in the presidential elections and was named Jamaica's sixth prime minister. After serving as PNP president for 14 years and leading the party to an unprecedented fourth electoral term in 2002, Patterson, at the PNP's annual conference in September 2005, announced to delegates and supporters it was his last conference as party leader.

He later announced his retirement as prime minister.

During his tenure as prime minister, Patterson charted a number of accomplishments, including massive infrastructural development of the country, a calming of the intense political rivalry between the nation's two political parties, and the attracting of massive overseas investment into Jamaica, primarily in the tourism sector. Patterson will also be remembered locally and internationally for his contribution to Jamaica's foreign relations, being instrumental in the development of CARICOM and in representing the island's interests overseas.

- Erica Virtue



Governor General Kenneth Hall (left) poses with former Prime Minister PJ Patterson on Patterson's last day in office. Patterson was Jamaica's longest-serving Prime Minister with 14 years.