

# Jamaica electoral office certifies Labor Party win

The Miami Herald  
Sep. 07, 2007

KINGSTON, Jamaica --

Jamaica's electoral office on Thursday confirmed the Labor Party's victory in a close election, sealing its return to power after 18 years in opposition.

Final certified results showed that the party of Bruce Golding, the Caribbean island's next prime minister, won by a slim majority in Monday's vote.

Outgoing Prime Minister Portia Simpson Miller and her People's National Party lost by 2,940 votes.

The final vote tally gave Labor 33 of the 60 parliamentary seats. The People's National Party will now control 27 seats, down from 34, according to an electoral office statement.

Ballots were cast by 808,240 islanders, or about 60 percent of the roughly 1.3 million eligible voters, electoral commission chairman Errol Miller told the Jamaica Gleaner newspaper.

Golding, who campaigned on his promise to reduce Jamaica's crushing national debt while improving the lives of its large underclass, is expected to be sworn in early next week.

Monday's vote was Simpson Miller's first test as premier in a general election.

Jamaica's first female prime minister, Simpson Miller was chosen by party delegates for her post in March 2006 when her predecessor, P.J. Patterson, retired after 14 years as the Caribbean country's leader.