Kuria: Don’t divide Church

By EMMAN OMARI

ARCHBISHOP Manasses Kuria, head of the Church of the Province of Kenya, yesterday accused some members of Mt. Kenya South Diocese of trying to divide the Church.

Kuria was reacting to a page 1 Daily Nation story yesterday in which it was claimed that the top leadership of the Church Province of Kenya (CPK) was interfering unduly in the affairs of the Kiambu-based diocese.

Ten members of the bishopric electoral college in the diocese said: “In the name of God, we plead with the CPK bishops to leave the diocese of Mount Kenya South alone to steer its own course.”

Archbishop Kuria yesterday stressed that the CPK bishops were not divided and the followers should not divide them.

At a press briefing at Nairobi’s All Saints Cathedral, the archbishop (above) dissociated himself from the statement and said his standpoint had been taken in consultation with CPK chancellor Paul Kihara Karuki. Karuki, who is also the legal adviser to the CPK, read the statement on behalf of the archbishop to the press.

But before reading, he asked Kuria to go through it again before the press could have it. The archbishop read and signed it in front of the press.

He warned members not to conduct church affairs through the press. Only he.

Newly elected bishop sacked

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Yesterday’s statement claimed that the communion had been boycotted by some bishops. They had asked the bishops to keep off the Mt. Kenya South bishopric elections, saying they were capable of making a decision.

The archbishop called for total discipline in the church, adding that “all bishops of the province must be respected. He would be seeking assistance from all bishops in consecrating a new bishop when he is elected, as is required by the CPK constitution.

Agreement

This was in line with the bishops’ agreement during the last Monday meeting.

“The position of the CPK is that the election of the bishop will be carried out following the normal procedures of the constitution,” the statement said.

The chancellor confirmed that the process was underway. He warned against interference in the election which, he hoped, would take place during the latter part of next month.

The archbishop was brief and requested the press to stick to the statement. He did not allow any question from the press. However, he appeared relaxed and jovial throughout the briefing.