

February, 2013, according to the Osaka-To concept. They made public a plan for the installation of an office to take charge of administrative work in Osaka City.

The Act has a strong aspect as a law for coping with the problems in the Osaka area, as is clear from the circumstances of establishment. But the installation of a local special case system is not so easy, since Art. 95 of the Constitution demands the consent through a local referendum as a condition for the establishment of a law which applies only to a municipal corporation. Therefore, it seems that the Act specified a large city system as a general system which does not have local limitations attached.

Recent discussion concerning a local government system has focused on the source of revenue and transfer of authority. As mentioned above, although there was a procedural problem in the presentation process of the bill, the request for residents' autonomy shown also in the argument of the Special Sub-Committee is reflected in the Act.

Concerning the system and employment of local government, the extensive control and participation by the national government have often been emphasized in Japan. It is proved by a consignment to the extensive law about the local government by the Constitution, and the existence of various kinds of local administration and finance statutes based on it that the tradition of the powerful centralization of power under the previous Constitution has not necessarily ceased even now. On the other hand, although this law is related to the procedure for the arrangement of the local administration system, it is concerned also with the substance of a local government system by specifying the reflection of the residents' autonomy which led to a referendum on the initiative based on the autonomy of the local government.

2. Law of Property and Obligations

The Interim Draft on the Revision of the Civil Code (Law of Obligations)

February 26, 2013

Background:

Since 2009, in the special committee of the Legislative Council at the Ministry of Justice, the revision of the Civil Code (Law of Obligations) has been discussed. And the Interim Draft of that revision was published on February 26, 2013.

Main Contents:

According to the pre-note of the Interim Draft, the provisions of Book 1 (*inter alia*, from Article 90 to Article 174-2) and Book 3 (*inter alia*, from Article 399 to Article 696) of the Civil Code have been mainly under revision. The provisions not mentioned in this Draft are planned to be kept as present.

Editorial Note:

The special committee of the Legislative Council took the procedure of public-comment on this Draft, and plans to propose the Temporary Draft by July 2014.

3. Family Law

Domestic-Relations Cases Procedures Act

Law No. 52, May 25, 2011 (Effective on January 1, 2013)

Background:

In recent years, in reaction to the growing importance of the enhancement of judicial functions consistent with society's multiple needs, a series of acts on civil procedures has been established or revised: from the Civil Execution Act, established in 1979 to the Domestic-Relations Adjudication Act and its regulation, revised in 2011 with a general law, the Non-Contentious Cases Procedures Act. With this revision, the name was a little changed to 'The Domestic-Relations Cases Procedures Act' in order to show that it was providing not only the adjudications (*shinpan* in Japanese), but also the conciliations (*chotei* in