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The Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Japan posted its first trade surplus in five months in February on a recovery in auto and electronics exports to the United States.

The Ministry of Finance said Thursday that globally, Japan's exports declined 2.7 percent from a year earlier to 5.44 trillion yen (\$65.2 billion). Imports increased 9.2 percent to 5.41 trillion yen.

That resulted in a surplus of 32.9 billion yen (\$394 million), down 95 percent from a year earlier.

For years, Japan ran huge trade surpluses. But since October, imports outpaced exports as Japan is importing more oil and gas to make up for the shortfall from nuclear power plants shut down after last year's Fukushima disaster.

Exports have also been hurt by manufacturers shifting production overseas to avoid the strong yen.

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