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**Sec: B(B2)**

**Practical 3:**

**Part 5:**

**Conversion Function in SQL**

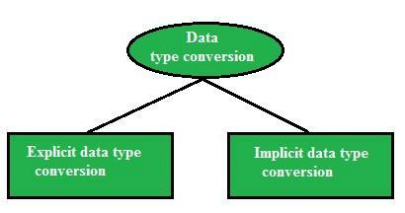
In SQL **data type conversion** is important for effective **database management** and accurate query results. Data type conversion ensures that data from different sources or columns can be correctly interpreted and manipulated, especially when dealing with different formats like **numbers**, text, **dates**, and other data types.

**Types of Data Type Conversion in SQL**

There are two main types of data type conversion in SQL.

● **Implicit Data Type Conversion:** This is done automatically by the database management system (**DBMS**) when SQL operations involve columns of different data types. For instance, a **string** value might automatically be converted into a **numeric type** if required by a mathematical operation.

● **Explicit Data Type Conversion:** This is done by the user, who specifies the conversion. This is necessary when SQL cannot automatically convert between data types, or when more control over the conversion is needed.



**1. Overview of Conversion Functions**

| **Function** | **Oracle**  **(SQL\*Plus)** | **MySQL** | **Description** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| TO\_CHAR() | Yes | ❌ No | Converts a date/number to a string |
| TO\_DATE() | Yes | ❌ No | Converts a string to a date |
| TO\_NUMBER() | Yes | ❌ No | Converts a string to a number |
| CAST() | Yes | Yes | Converts from one data type to another |
| CONVERT() | ❌ No | Yes | Converts string from one character set to another |
| FORMAT() | ❌ No | Yes | Formats numbers with decimal places |
| STR\_TO\_DATE () | ❌ No | Yes | Converts a string to a date |
| DATE\_FORMAT () | ❌ No | Yes | Formats a date as a string |
| TIME\_FORMAT () | ❌ No | Yes | Formats time values |

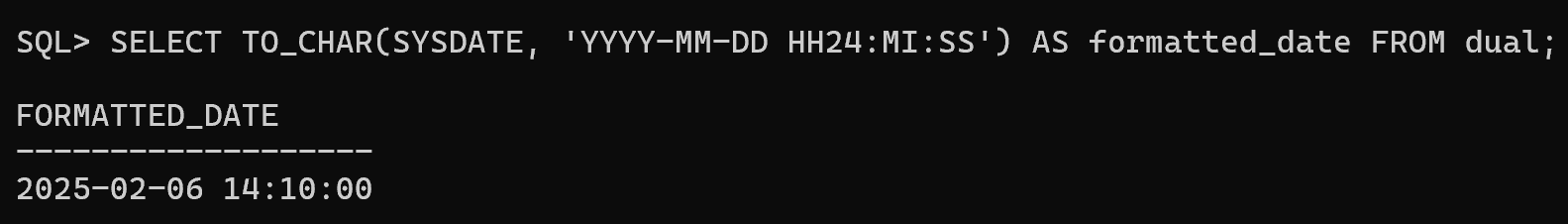
| UNIX\_TIMEST AMP() | ❌ No | Yes | Converts a date to Unix  timestamp |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| FROM\_UNIXTI ME() | ❌ No | Yes | Converts Unix timestamp to a date |

**2. Conversion Functions in SQL\*Plus (Oracle) /skip if you want to use mysql platform**

Oracle provides TO\_CHAR(), TO\_DATE(), TO\_NUMBER(), and CAST() for conversion.

**2.1 TO\_CHAR() – Convert Date/Number to String**

**Use Case:** Format **date & time** into a human-readable string.

SELECT TO\_CHAR(SYSDATE, 'YYYY-MM-DD HH24:MI:SS') AS formatted\_date FROM dual; 

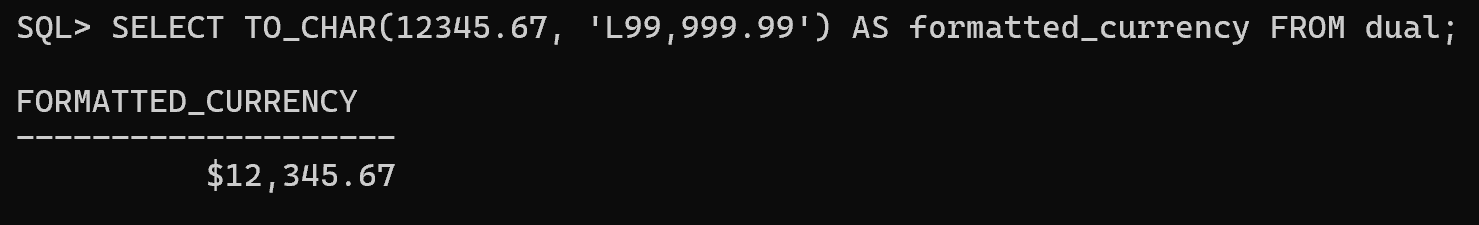
**Output Example:**

formatted\_date

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2025-01-29 14:35:50

**Format Number as Currency:**

SELECT TO\_CHAR(12345.67, 'L99,999.99') AS formatted\_currency FROM dual;

**Output Example:**

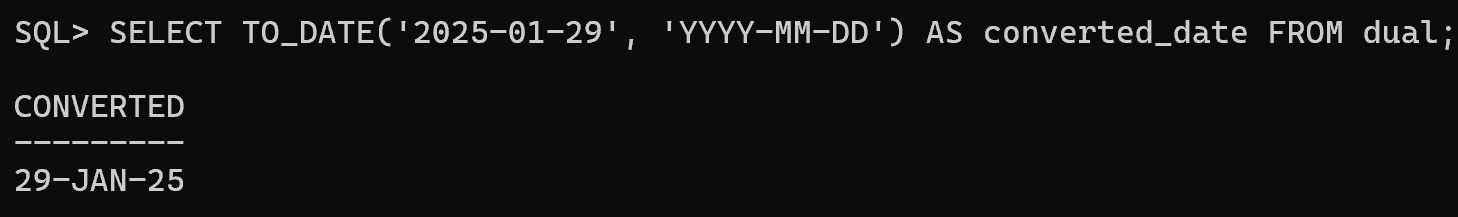
formatted\_currency

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$12,345.67

**2.2 TO\_DATE() – Convert String to Date**

**Use Case:** Convert a **string** into a **date format**.

SELECT TO\_DATE('2025-01-29', 'YYYY-MM-DD') AS converted\_date FROM dual; 

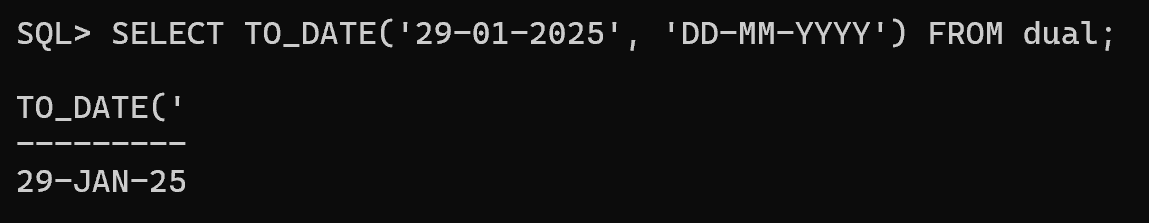
**Output Example:**

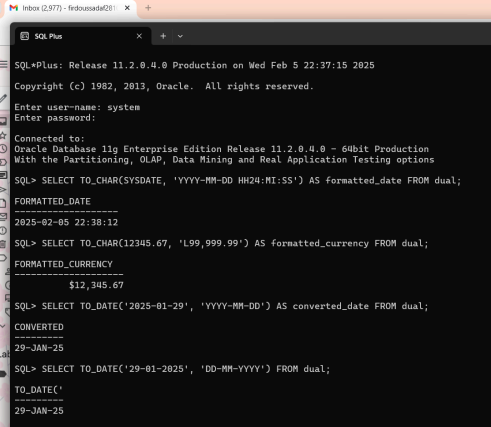
converted\_date

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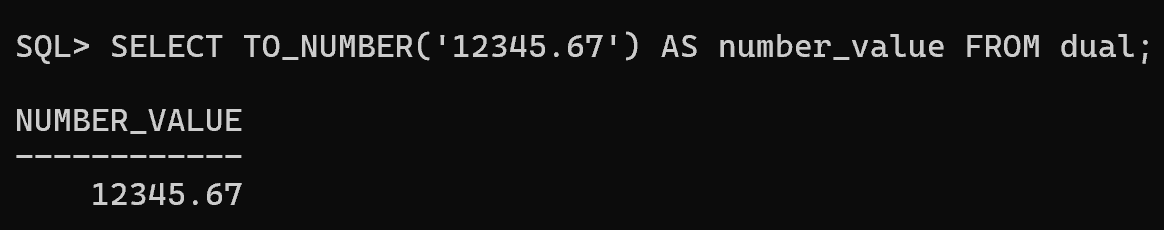
29-JAN-25

**Using Different Date Formats:**

SELECT TO\_DATE('29-01-2025', 'DD-MM-YYYY') FROM dual; Sample output

**2.3 TO\_NUMBER() – Convert String to Number**

**Use Case:** Convert a **string** containing numbers into a **numeric type**.

SELECT TO\_NUMBER('12345.67') AS number\_value FROM dual; **Output Example:**

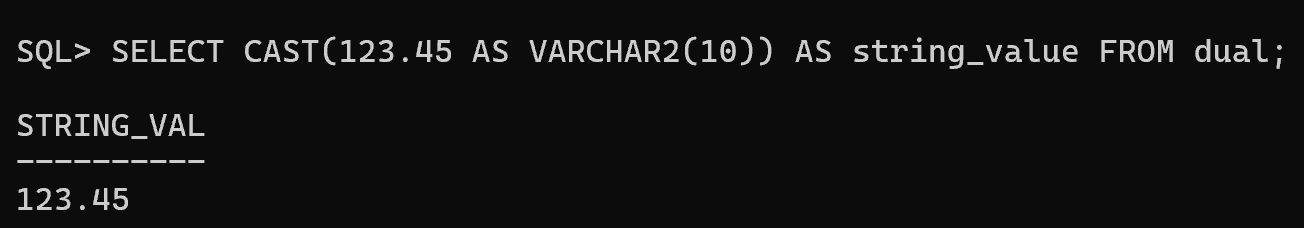
number\_value

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12345.67

**2.4 CAST() – Convert Data Types**

**Use Case:** Convert a number to a string or vice versa.

SELECT CAST(123.45 AS VARCHAR2(10)) AS string\_value FROM dual; 

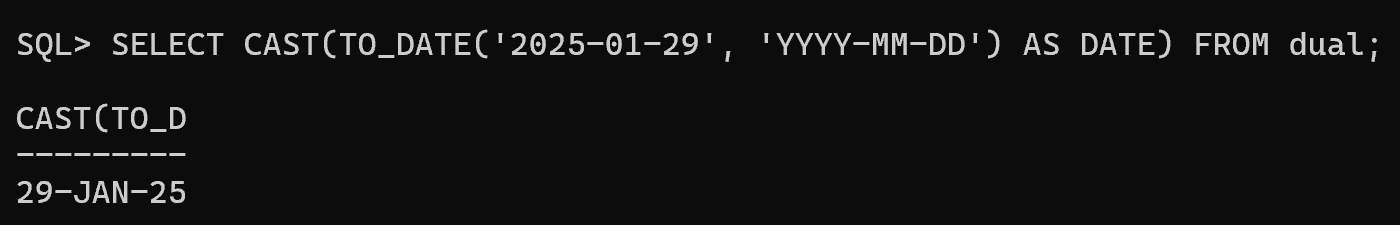
**Output Example:**

string\_value

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123.45

**Convert String to Date:**

SELECT CAST(TO\_DATE('2025-01-29', 'YYYY-MM-DD') AS DATE) FROM dual; 

**3. Conversion Functions in MySQL //SKIP IF DONE WITH ORACLE SQLPLUS**

MySQL provides CAST(), CONVERT(), STR\_TO\_DATE(), DATE\_FORMAT(), etc.

**3.1 CAST() – Convert Data Types**

**Use Case:** Convert an integer to a **string**.

SELECT CAST(12345 AS CHAR) AS string\_value;

**Output Example:**

diff

string\_value

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12345

**Convert a String to an Integer:**

SELECT CAST('12345' AS SIGNED) AS number\_value;

**3.2 CONVERT() – Convert Between Character Sets**

**Use Case:** Change **character encoding**.

SELECT CONVERT('Héllo' USING utf8mb4) AS utf8\_text; **Convert a Number to String:**

SELECT CONVERT(12345, CHAR) AS string\_value;

**3.3 FORMAT() – Format Number with Commas**

**Use Case:** Display **large numbers with commas**.

SELECT FORMAT(1234567.89, 2) AS formatted\_number;

**Output Example:**

diff

formatted\_number

----------------

1,234,567.89

**3.4 STR\_TO\_DATE() – Convert String to Date**

**Use Case:** Convert **string into date format**.

SELECT STR\_TO\_DATE('29-01-2025', '%d-%m-%Y') AS converted\_date;

**Output Example:**

diff

converted\_date

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2025-01-29

**3.5 DATE\_FORMAT() – Format a Date as a String Use Case:** Display **formatted dates**.

SELECT DATE\_FORMAT(NOW(), '%W, %M %d, %Y') AS formatted\_date;

**Output Example:**

diff

formatted\_date

-----------------------

Tuesday, January 29, 2025

**3.6 TIME\_FORMAT() – Format Time**

**Use Case:** Convert **24-hour time** into **12-hour format**.

SELECT TIME\_FORMAT('14:35:50', '%h:%i %p') AS formatted\_time;

**Output Example:**

diff

formatted\_time

---------------

02:35 PM

**3.7 UNIX\_TIMESTAMP() – Convert Date to Unix Timestamp Use Case:** Store dates as **timestamps**.

SELECT UNIX\_TIMESTAMP('2025-01-29 14:35:50') AS unix\_time;

**Output Example:**

unix\_time

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1740792950

**3.8 FROM\_UNIXTIME() – Convert Unix Timestamp to Date Use Case:** Convert **timestamps** back to a **date**.

SELECT FROM\_UNIXTIME(1740792950) AS converted\_date;

**Output Example:**

converted\_date

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2025-01-29 14:35:50

**4. Real-World Use Cases of Conversion Functions Financial Data Reporting**

Convert salary figures into **formatted currency**.

SELECT emp\_id, TO\_CHAR(salary, 'L99,999.99') AS formatted\_salary FROM employees;

**Log Analysis (MySQL)**

Convert timestamps into **human-readable format**.

SELECT FROM\_UNIXTIME(UNIX\_TIMESTAMP()) AS current\_time;

**Data Migration**

When migrating from **CSV files**, convert **strings to dates**.

SELECT STR\_TO\_DATE('29-01-2025', '%d-%m-%Y') AS converted\_date;

**5. Summary Table**

**Function Oracle (SQL\*Plus)**

**MySQ L**

**Purpose**

TO\_CHAR() Yes ❌ No Convert date/number to string

TO\_DATE() Yes ❌ No Convert string to date

TO\_NUMBER( )

Yes ❌ No Convert string to number

CAST() Yes Yes Convert between data types

CONVERT() ❌ No Yes Convert between character sets

FORMAT() ❌ No Yes Format number with commas

STR\_TO\_DAT E()

DATE\_FORMA T()

TIME\_FORMA T()

UNIX\_TIMES TAMP()

FROM\_UNIXT IME()

❌ No Yes Convert string to date ❌ No Yes Format a date as a string ❌ No Yes Format time values

❌ No Yes Convert date to Unix timestamp

❌ No Yes Convert Unix timestamp to date

**Advanced Real-World Use Cases of Conversion Functions in MySQL & SQL\*Plus (Oracle)**

**1️**⃣**E-Commerce: Converting Prices for Different Currenci**

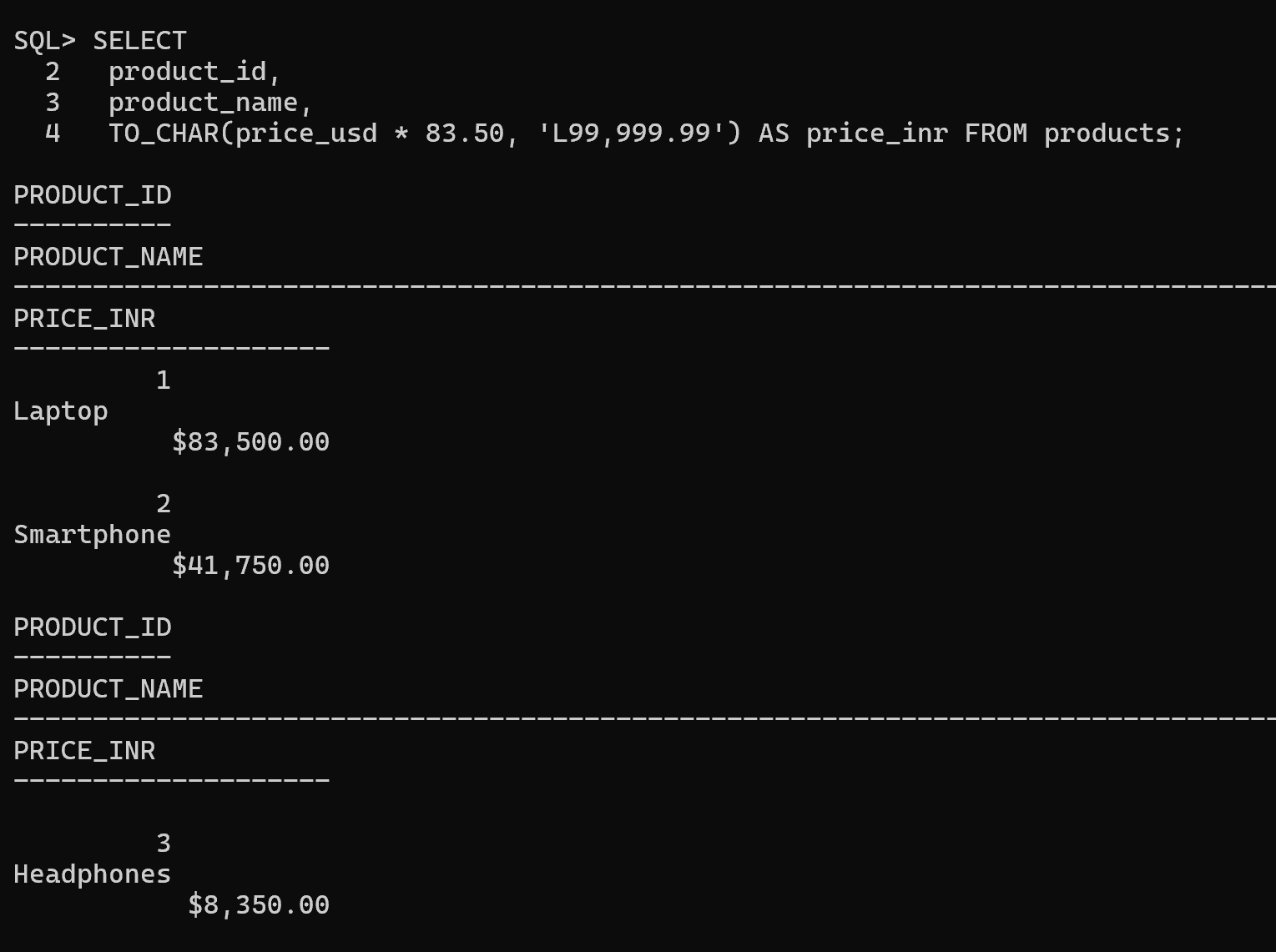
**Scenario:** An e-commerce site needs to convert prices from USD to INR and format them properly.

**Oracle (SQL\*Plus):**

SELECT

product\_id,

product\_name,

TO\_CHAR(price\_usd \* 83.50, 'L99,999.99') AS price\_inr FROM products; 

**Why?**

● Uses TO\_CHAR() in Oracle and FORMAT() in MySQL to **add currency formatting**.

● 1 USD = **83.50 INR** (exchange rate example).

**Example Output:**

| **product\_id** | **product\_name** | **price\_inr** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 101 | iPhone 15 | ₹99,999.99 |
| 202 | MacBook Pro | ₹2,19,999.99 |

**2️**⃣**Banking: Detecting Fraudulent Transactions Using Da Conversions**

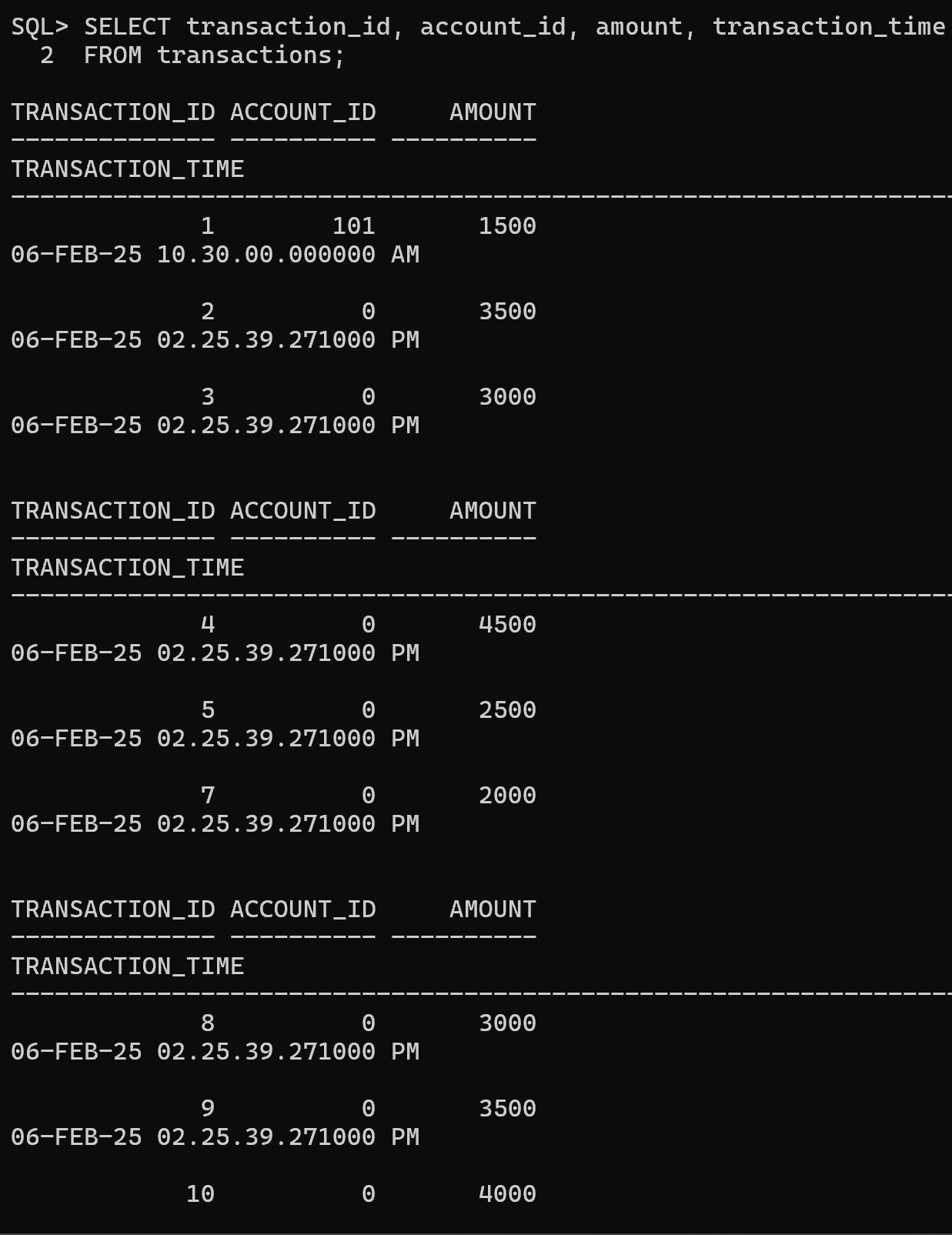
**Scenario:** A bank flags **suspicious transactions** that happened at **odd hours (midnight to 4 AM)**.

**Oracle (SQL\*Plus):**

SELECT transaction\_id, account\_id, amount,

TO\_CHAR(transaction\_time, 'HH24:MI') AS transaction\_hour FROM transactions

WHERE EXTRACT(HOUR FROM transaction\_time) BETWEEN 0 AND 4;

****

**Why?**

● Uses TO\_CHAR() (Oracle) and TIME\_FORMAT() (MySQL) to **extract and format time**.

● Filters transactions **between 00:00 and 04:00**.

**Example Output:**

| **transaction\_id** | **account\_id** | **amount** | **transaction\_hour** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 89234 | 123456 | 5000 | 02:30 |
| 97345 | 789012 | 25000 | 03:15 |

**3️**⃣**IoT & Smart Devices: Storing and Retrieving Un Timestamps**

**Scenario:** A smart home system stores **sensor readings** as Unix timestamps and needs human-readable timestamps.

**Oracle (SQL\*Plus) - Convert Unix Timestamp to Readable Date:**

SELECT sensor\_id, FROM\_TZ(TO\_TIMESTAMP(1706505600), 'UTC') AS reading\_time FROM sensor\_logs;

****

**Why?**

● Converts 1706505600 (Unix timestamp) into a **readable date-time format**. **Example Output:**

| **sensor\_id** | **reading\_time** |
| --- | --- |

| 101 | 2025-01-29 12:00:00 |
| --- | --- |

**4️**⃣**Marketing Analytics: Extracting Month and Year fr Dates**

**Scenario:** A company wants to analyze customer purchases by **month and year**.

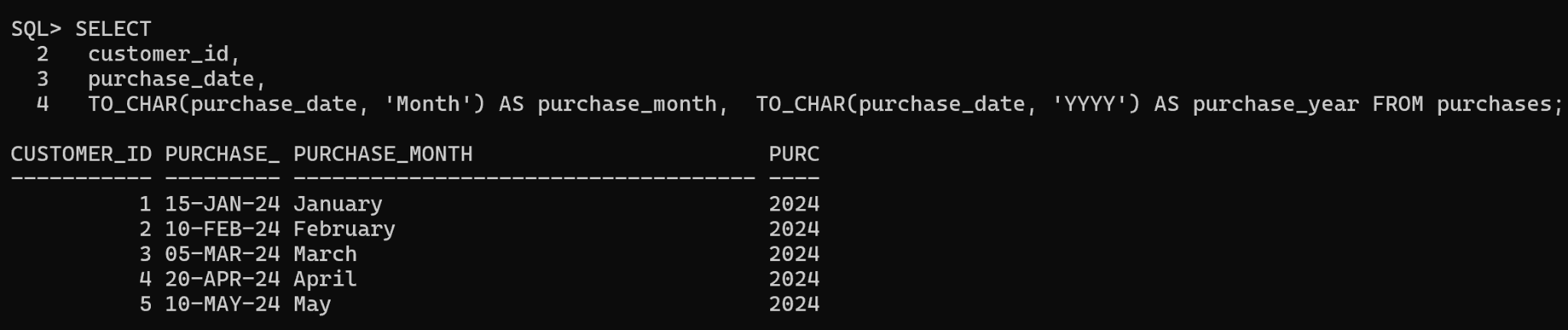
**Oracle (SQL\*Plus):**

SELECT

customer\_id,

purchase\_date,

TO\_CHAR(purchase\_date, 'Month') AS purchase\_month, TO\_CHAR(purchase\_date, 'YYYY') AS purchase\_year FROM purchases;

****

**Why?**

● Uses TO\_CHAR() (Oracle) and DATE\_FORMAT() (MySQL) to extract **month and year** from a **purchase date**.

**Example Output:**

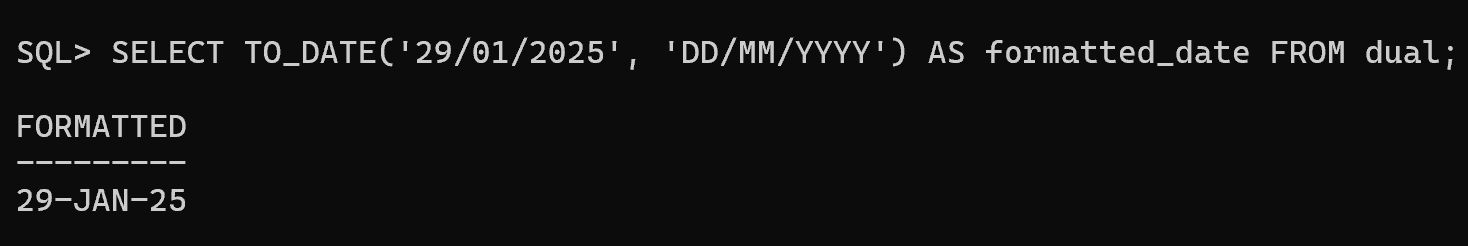
**customer\_id purchase\_date purchase\_month purchase\_year** 501 2025-01-29 January 2025

**5️**⃣**Data Migration: Converting String Dates into Proper Da Format**

**Scenario:** A company migrating old **CSV data** where dates are stored as strings (DD/MM/YYYY).

**Oracle (SQL\*Plus):**

SELECT TO\_DATE('29/01/2025', 'DD/MM/YYYY') AS formatted\_date FROM dual;

****

**Why?**

● Converts 29/01/2025 (string) into a **date type** in Oracle (TO\_DATE()) and MySQL (STR\_TO\_DATE()).

**Example Output:**

| **formatted\_date** |
| --- |
| 2025-01-29 |

**6️**⃣**Logistics & Delivery: Calculating Expected Delivery Ti Based on Distance**

**Scenario:** Estimate delivery **ETA** based on **distance traveled** and **average speed**.

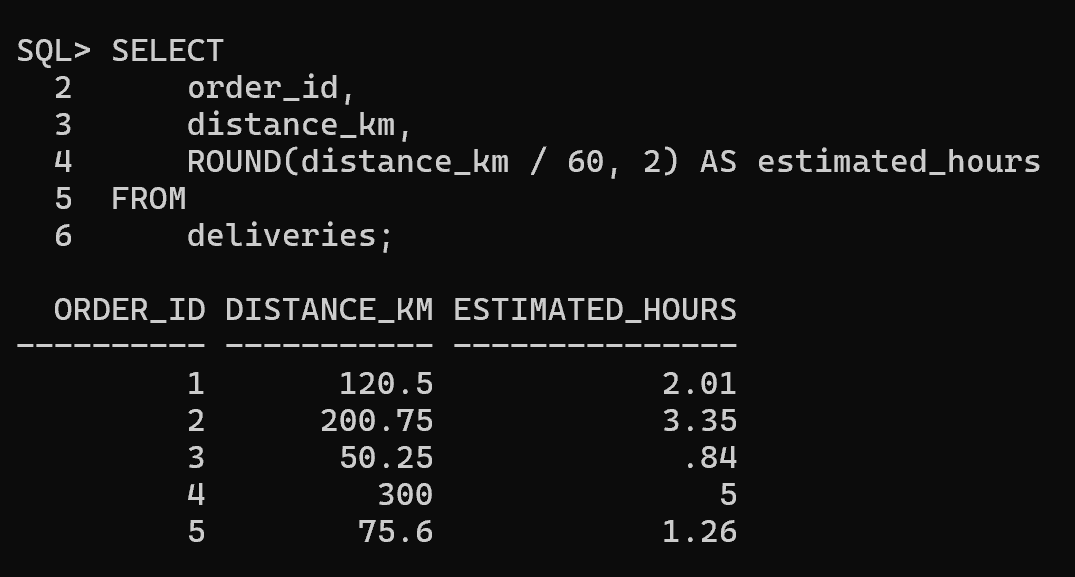
**Oracle (SQL\*Plus):**

SELECT

order\_id,

distance\_km,

ROUND(distance\_km / 60, 2) AS estimated\_hours FROM deliveries;

****

**Why?**

● Divides distance\_km by 60 km/h (average speed).

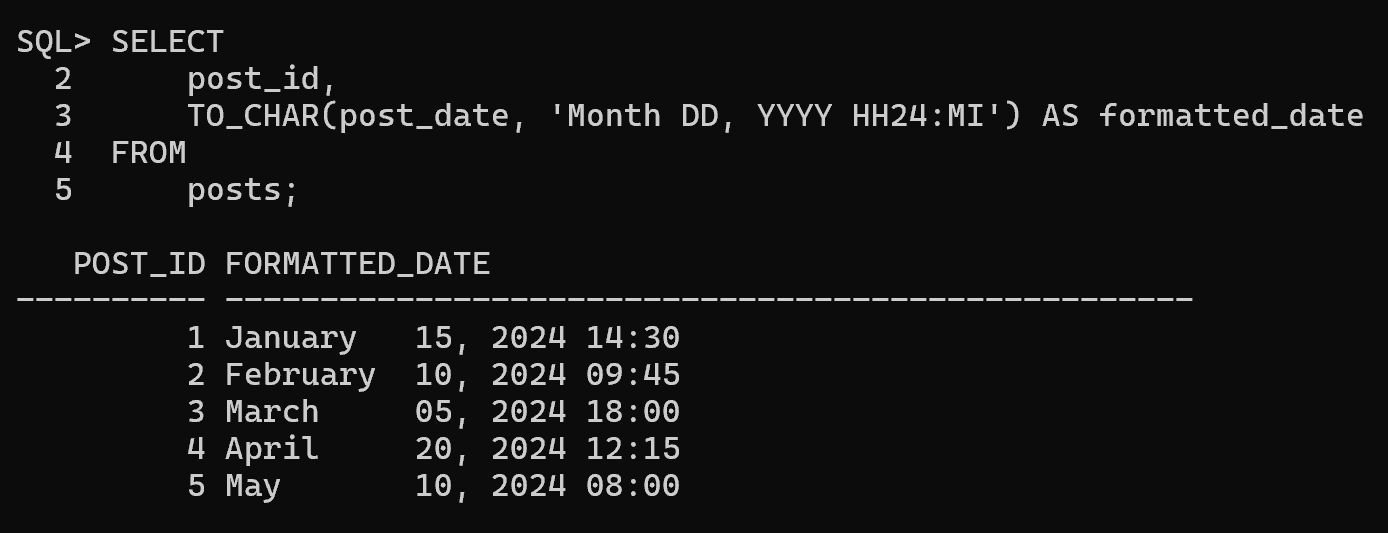
**Example Output:**

| **order\_id** | **distance\_km** | **estimated\_hours** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1001 | 120 | 2.00 |

**7️**⃣**Social Media Analytics: Converting Post Dates in Readable Formats**

**Scenario:** A social media platform needs to display post timestamps **beautifully**. **Oracle (SQL\*Plus):**

SELECT post\_id, TO\_CHAR(post\_date, 'Month DD, YYYY HH24:MI') AS formatted\_date FROM posts;

****

**Why?**

● Converts **date into a social-media friendly format**.

**Example Output:**

| **post\_id** | **formatted\_date** |
| --- | --- |
| 555 | January 29, 2025 14:35 |

**Summary Table**

| **Scenario** | **Oracle (SQL\*Plus)** | **MySQL** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Convert prices to INR | TO\_CHAR(price,  'L99,999.99') | FORMAT(price, 2) |
| Detect fraud  based on time | EXTRACT(HOUR FROM  transaction\_time) | HOUR(transaction\_tim e) |
| Convert Unix timestamp | FROM\_TZ(TO\_TIMESTAMP( ...), 'UTC') | FROM\_UNIXTIME(...) |
| Extract month & year | TO\_CHAR(date, 'Month YYYY') | DATE\_FORMAT(date, '%M %Y') |
| Convert string to date | TO\_DATE('29/01/2025', 'DD/MM/YYYY') | STR\_TO\_DATE('29/01/2 025', '%d/%m/%Y') |
| Estimate  delivery ETA | ROUND(distance\_km / 60, 2) | FORMAT(distance\_km / 60, 2) |
| Format social media  timestamps | TO\_CHAR(post\_date, 'Month DD, YYYY  HH24:MI') | DATE\_FORMAT(post\_dat e, '%M %d, %Y  %H:%i') |