

Blockchain Experiment 1

AIM: Cryptography in Blockchain, Merkle root Tree Hash

THEORY:

Q1: Cryptographic Hash functions in Blockchain

Cryptographic hash functions are mathematical algorithms that convert input data of any size into a fixed-length string of characters, known as a hash value. These functions are fast, deterministic, and one-way, meaning that the original input cannot be retrieved from the hash.

Working of Cryptographic Hash Functions

- **Input Processing**

The function accepts input data of any length, such as text, files, or data streams, and processes it using mathematical operations.

- **Fixed-Size Output Generation**

Regardless of input size, the output hash has a fixed length, usually represented as a hexadecimal string.

- **Deterministic Operation**

The same input always produces the same hash, enabling reliable data verification.

- **Avalanche Effect**

A minor change in input, even a single bit, results in a completely different hash output.

- **One-Way Computation**

It is computationally infeasible to reverse the hash to obtain the original input.

- **Collision Resistance**

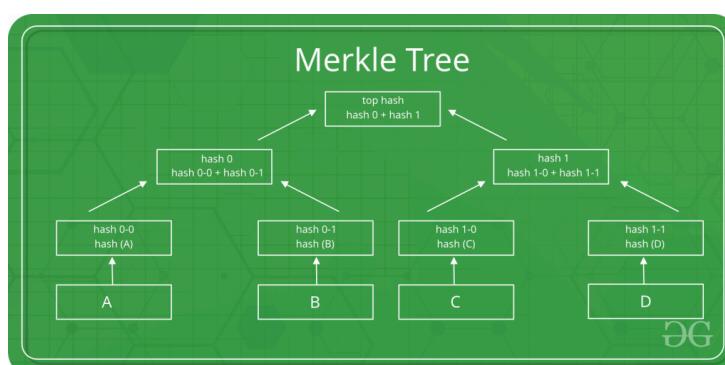
The probability of two different inputs generating the same hash value is extremely low.

Popular Cryptographic Hash Algorithms

- MD5 (Message Digest Algorithm 5)
- SHA-1 (Secure Hash Algorithm 1)
- SHA-2 Family (SHA-256, SHA-512)
- SHA-3 (Keccak)
- BLAKE2 and BLAKE3

Q2: What is a Merkle Tree?

A Merkle Tree, also known as a Hash Tree, is a tree-based data structure in which each leaf node stores the hash of a data block, and each non-leaf node stores the hash of its child nodes. The final hash at the top of the tree is called the Merkle Root.



Structure of a Merkle Tree

- **Leaf Nodes:**
Contain hash values of individual transactions or data blocks.
- **Internal Nodes:**
Store hashes generated by combining and hashing child nodes.
- **Merkel Root:**
The topmost node representing the combined hash of all underlying data.

Q3: What is a Cryptographic Puzzle and explain the Golden Nonce

Cryptographic Puzzle

A cryptographic puzzle is a problem that miners must solve to:

- Add a new block to the blockchain
- Prove computational work (Proof-of-Work)

The puzzle requires finding a hash that satisfies a difficulty condition.

Golden Nonce

- A nonce is a random number added to block data
- Miners repeatedly change the nonce and recompute the hash
- The Golden Nonce is the specific nonce value that produces a hash meeting the required difficulty (e.g., hash starts with a certain number of zeros)

Q4: How does a Merkle Tree work?

Step-by-Step Working

- a. Each transaction is hashed using a cryptographic hash function
- b. Hashes are paired and combined
- c. Combined hashes are hashed again
- d. If the number of hashes is odd, the last hash is duplicated
- e. This process continues until one hash remains
- f. The final hash is the Merkle Root

Q5: Benefits of Merkle Tree

- Reduces the amount of data required for verification
- Improves data integrity and security
- Enables fast synchronization between nodes
- Suitable for large-scale systems

Q6: Use cases of Merkle Tree

- **Blockchain Technology**
Used to store and verify transactions in a block.
- **Distributed Systems**
Ensures consistency of data across nodes.
- **Version Control Systems**
Used in systems like Git for tracking file changes.

- **Database Verification**

Detects unauthorized data modification.

TASKS PERFORMED:

Task 1: Hash Generation using SHA-256: Developed a Python program to compute a SHA-256 hash for any given input string using the hashlib library.

```
import hashlib

def create_hash(string):
    # Create a hash object using SHA-256 algorithm
    hash_object = hashlib.sha256()
    # Convert the string to bytes and update the hash object
    hash_object.update(string.encode('utf-8'))
    # Get the hexadecimal representation of the hash
    hash_string = hash_object.hexdigest()
    # Return the hash string
    return hash_string

# Example usage
input_string = input("Enter a string: ")
hash_result = create_hash(input_string)
print("Hash:", hash_result)
```

Output:

```
... Enter a string: Anuprita
Hash: 2de9bb4358c1b47cb217162ceac34c40e75c6f64b69c64f1514191df5ca9ea04
```

Task 2: Target Hash Generation withNonce: Created a program to generate a hash code by concatenating a user input string and a nonce value to simulate the mining process.

```
import hashlib

# Get user input
input_string = input("Enter a string: ")
nonce = input("Enter the nonce: ")

# Concatenate the string and nonce
hash_string = input_string + nonce

# Calculate the hash using SHA-256
```

```

hash_object = hashlib.sha256(hash_string.encode('utf-8'))
hash_code = hash_object.hexdigest()

# Print the hash code
print("Hash Code:", hash_code)

```

Output:

```

*** Enter a string: Anuprita
Enter the nonce: 1
Hash Code: e9bfe4cbd3bf75156349306e50748e360fc0d80db11917953874f1be3c0bb5d5

```

Task 3: Proof-of-Work Puzzle Solving: Implemented a program to find the nonce that, when combined with a given input string, produces a hash starting with a specified number of leading zeros.

```

import hashlib

def find_nonce(input_string, num_zeros):
    nonce = 0
    hash_prefix = '0' * num_zeros

    while True:
        # Concatenate the string and nonce
        hash_string = input_string + str(nonce)
        # Calculate the hash using SHA-256
        hash_object = hashlib.sha256(hash_string.encode('utf-8'))
        hash_code = hash_object.hexdigest()

        # Check if the hash code has the required number of leading zeros
        if hash_code.startswith(hash_prefix):
            print("Hash:", hash_code)
            return nonce

    nonce += 1

# Get user input
input_string = "Anuprita"
num_zeros = 1

# Find the expected nonce
expected_nonce = find_nonce(input_string, num_zeros)

# Print the expected nonce
print("Input String:", input_string)

```

```

print("Leading Zeros:", num_zeros)
print("ExpectedNonce:", expected_nonce)

...
Hash: 0dd272e39c62795d8a5f0bbf616738b86fff23b95a48c73e6ca4b5216f04fd8
Input String: Anuprita
Leading Zeros: 1
ExpectedNonce: 67

```

Task 4: Merkle Tree Construction: Built a Merkle Tree from a list of transactions by recursively hashing pairs of transaction hashes, doubling up last nodes if needed, and generated the Merkle Root hash for blockchain transaction integrity.

```

import hashlib

def build_merkle_tree(transactions):
    if len(transactions) == 0:
        return None
    # Hash each transaction initially
    hashed_transactions = [
        hashlib.sha256(t.encode('utf-8')).hexdigest()
        for t in transactions
    ]
    print("Initial Hashed Transactions:", hashed_transactions)
    if len(hashed_transactions) == 1:
        return hashed_transactions[0]
    # Recursive construction of the Merkle Tree
    current_level = hashed_transactions
    level = 1
    while len(current_level) > 1:
        print(f"\nLevel {level} Hashes:")
        # If odd number of nodes, duplicate last
        if len(current_level) % 2 != 0:
            current_level.append(current_level[-1])
        new_level = []

        for i in range(0, len(current_level), 2):
            combined = current_level[i] + current_level[i + 1]
            hash_combined = hashlib.sha256(
                combined.encode('utf-8')
            ).hexdigest()
            new_level.append(hash_combined)
        print(
            f"  Combining {current_level[i][:6]}... and "

```

```

        f"{current_level[i+1][:6]}... to get
{hash_combined[:6]}..."
    )
    current_level = new_level
    level += 1
return current_level[0]

# Example usage
transactions = [
    "Anuprita -> Sneha : 800",
    "Sneha -> Shreya : 540",
    "Shreya -> Ria : 100",
    "Eesha -> Anuprita : 500",
    "Ria -> Sneha : 680"
]

print("\nMerkle Tree Generation")
merkle_root = build_merkle_tree(transactions)

print("\nMerkle Root:", merkle_root)

"""
Merkle Tree Generation
Initial Hashed Transactions: ['4d5a82f66fcc5af28031a82a5ceb39dc3fe23097c56c8dff7720841a02aef1f', 'fd0b9eafb0c7f5403

Level 1 Hashes:
Combining 4d5a82... and fd0b9e... to get 9cd41e...
Combining 43dd57... and 2ed5c8... to get 9f37c0...
Combining 4313e3... and 4313e3... to get bc2172...

Level 2 Hashes:
Combining 9cd41e... and 9f37c0... to get 6fa7f1...
Combining bc2172... and bc2172... to get ba86e9...

Level 3 Hashes:
Combining 6fa7f1... and ba86e9... to get c5db5f...

Merkle Root: c5db5fb4092cf71773baf667101b0158168f44d9a99579c5385353c80ef38aff

```

CONCLUSION:

In this experiment, cryptographic hash functions and Merkle Tree construction were successfully implemented using Python. SHA-256 hashing ensured data integrity, while nonce-based Proof-of-Work and Merkle Root generation demonstrated secure and tamper-resistant transaction verification in blockchain systems.