ASSIGNMENT No. 5

TITLE:

Implement token ring based mutual exclusion algorithm.

Tools / Environment:

Java Programming Environment, jdk 1.8, Eclipse IDE.

Related Theory:

A distributed computing system is a collection of autonomous computing sites that do not share a global or common memory and communicate solely by exchanging messages over a communication facility. In a distributed computing system any given site (also referred to as "node") has only a partial or incomplete view of the total system and a system-wide common clock does not exist. Processes must share common hardware or software resources, cooperating in such a way that they can work in parallel and independently of each other. The access to a shared resource must be synchronized to ensure that only one process is making use of the resource at a given time. The problem of coordinating the execution of critical sections by each process is solved by providing mutually exclusive access in time to the critical section (CS). Each process must request permission to enter its critical section and must release it after it has completed its execution. A mutual exclusion algorithm must satisfy the following requirements:

i. At most one process can execute its critical section at a given time.
ii. If no process is in its critical section, any process requesting to enter its critical section must be allowed to do so at finite time.
iii. When competing processes concurrently request to enter their respective critical sections, the selection cannot be postponed indefinitely.
iv. A requesting process cannot be prevented by another one to enter its critical section within a finite delay

Token Ring algorithm achieves mutual exclusion in a distributed system by creating a bus network of processes. A logical ring is constructed with these processes and each process is assigned a position in the ring. Each process knows who is next in line after itself. When the ring is initialized, process 0 is given a token. The token circulates around the ring. When a process acquires the token from its neighbor, it checks to see if it is attempting to enter a critical region. If so, the process enters the region, does all the work it needs to, and leaves the region. After it has exited, it passes the token to the next process in the ring. It is not allowed to enter the critical region again using the same token. If a process is handed the token by its neighbor and is not interested in entering a critical region, it just passes the token along to the next process.

Mutual exclusion is a concurrency control property which is introduced to prevent race conditions. It is the requirement that a process can not enter its critical section while another concurrent process is currently present or executing in its critical section i.e only one process is allowed to execute the critical section at any given instance of time. **Mutual exclusion in single computer system Vs. distributed system:** In single computer system, memory and other resources are shared between different processes. The status of shared resources and the status of users is easily available in the shared memory so with the help of shared variable (For example: Semaphores) mutual exclusion problem can be easily solved. In Distributed systems, we neither have shared memory nor a common physical clock and there for we can not solve mutual exclusion problem using shared variables. To eliminate the mutual exclusion problem in distributed system approach based on message passing is used. A site in distributed system do not have complete information of state of the system due to lack of shared memory and a common physical clock. **Requirements of Mutual exclusion Algorithm:**

- **No Deadlock:** Two or more site should not endlessly wait for any message that will never arrive.
- **No Starvation:** Every site who wants to execute critical section should get an opportunity to execute it in finite time. Any site should not wait indefinitely to execute critical section while other site are repeatedly executing critical section
- **Fairness:** Each site should get a fair chance to execute critical section. Any request to execute critical section must be executed in the order they are made i.e Critical section execution requests should be executed in the order of their arrival in the system.
- **Fault Tolerance:** In case of failure, it should be able to recognize it by itself in order to continue functioning without any disruption.

Solution to distributed mutual exclusion: As we know shared variables or a local kernel can not be used to implement mutual exclusion in distributed systems. Message passing is a way to implement mutual exclusion. Below are the three approaches based on message passing to implement mutual exclusion in distributed systems:

Token Based Algorithm:

- A unique **token** is shared among all the sites.
- If a site possesses the unique token, it is allowed to enter its critical section
- This approach uses sequence number to order requests for the critical section.
- Each requests for critical section contains a sequence number. This sequence number is used to distinguish old and current requests.
- This approach insures Mutual exclusion as the token is unique

Advantages:

1. The correctness of this algorithm is evident. Only one process has the token at any instant, so only one process can be in a CS.

2. Since the token circulates among processes in a well-defined order, starvation cannot occur.

Disadvantages:

1. Once a process decides it wants to enter a CS, at worst it will have to wait for every other process to enter and leave one critical region.
2. If the token is ever lost, it must be regenerated. In fact, detecting that it is lost is difficult, since the amount of time between successive appearances of the token on the network is not a constant. The fact that the token has not been spotted for an hour does not mean that it has been lost; some process may still be using it.
3. The algorithm also runs into trouble if a process crashes, but recovery is easier than in the other cases. If we require a process receiving the token to acknowledge receipt, a dead process will be detected when its neighbor tries to give it the token and fails. At that point the dead process can be removed from the group, and the token holder can pass the token to the next member down the line