Experiment No.3
To implement the concept of Merkle root
Date of Performance: 24/08/23
Date of Submission: 24/08/23

AIM: To implement the concept of Merkle root

Objective: To develop a program to create a cryptogrphich hash using the concept of merkle tree

Theory:

A Merkle tree stores all the transactions in a block by producing a digital fingerprint of the entire set of transactions. It allows the user to verify whether a transaction can be included in a block or not.

Merkle trees are created by repeatedly calculating hashing pairs of nodes until there is only one hash left. This hash is called the Merkle Root, or the Root Hash. The Merkle Trees are constructed in a bottom-up approach

Every leaf node is a hash of transactional data, and the non-leaf node is a hash of its previous hashes. Merkle trees are in a binary tree, so it requires an even number of leaf nodes. If there is an odd number of transactions, the last hash will be duplicated once to create an even number of leaf nodes.

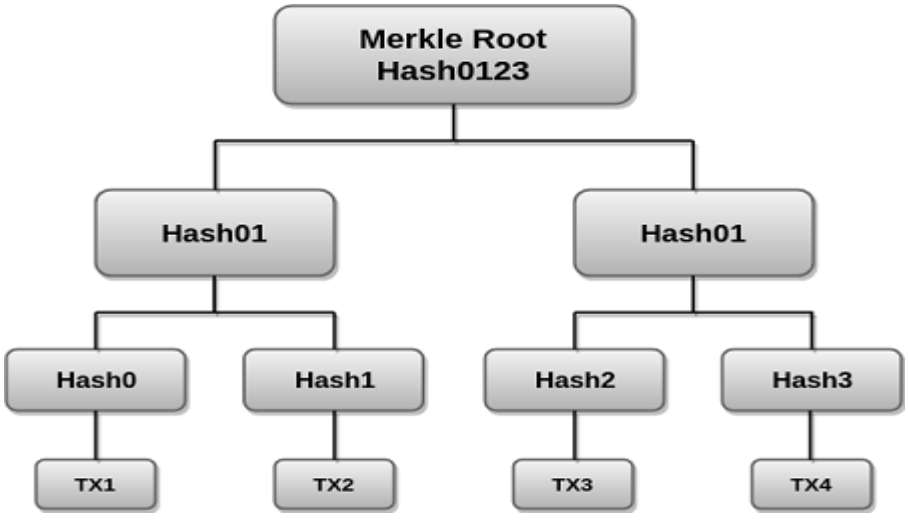


Fig.3.1 Merkle Root Tree Structure

The above example is the most common and simple form of a Merkle tree, i.e., Binary Merkle Tree. There are four transactions in a block: TX1, TX2, TX3, and TX4. Here you can see, there is a top hash which is the hash of the entire tree, known as the Root Hash, or

the Merkle Root. Each of these is repeatedly hashed, and stored in each leaf node, resulting in Hash 0, 1, 2, and 3. Consecutive pairs of leaf nodes are then summarized in a parent node by hashing Hash0 and Hash1, resulting in Hash01, and separately hashing Hash2 and Hash3, resulting in Hash23. The two hashes (Hash01 and Hash23) are then hashed again to produce the Root Hash or the Merkle Root.

Merkle Root is stored in the block header. The block header is the part of the bitcoin block which gets hash in the process of mining. It contains the hash of the last block, a Nonce, and the Root Hash of all the transactions in the current block in a Merkle Tree. So having the Merkle root in block header makes the transaction tamper-proof. As this Root Hash includes the hashes of all the transactions within the block, these transactions may result in saving the disk space.

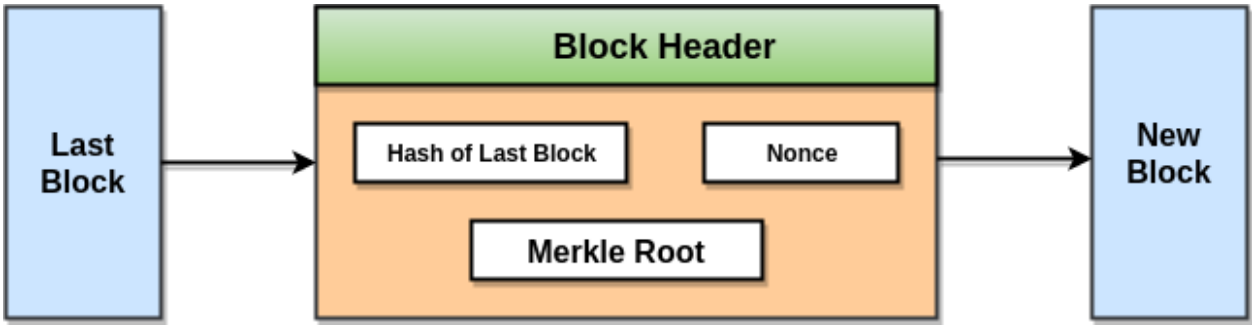


Fig.3.2 Merkle Root in Block

The Merkle Tree maintains the **integrity** of the data. If any single detail of transactions or order of the transaction's changes, then these changes reflected in the hash of that transaction. This change would cascade up the Merkle Tree to the Merkle Root, changing the value of the Merkle root and thus invalidating the block. So everyone can see that Merkle tree allows for a quick and simple test of whether a specific transaction is included in the set or not.

Process:

Step 1. The transaction represents the original data blocks which are hashed to produce transaction hashes (transaction id) which form the leaf nodes.

Step 2. The leaf nodes have to be even in number for a binary hash tree to work so if the number of leaf nodes is an odd number, then the last leaf node is duplicated to even the count.

Step 3. Each pair of leaf nodes is concatenated and hashed to form the second row of hashes.

Step 4. The process is repeated until a row is obtained with only two hashes

Step 5. These last two hashes are concatenated to form the Merkle root.

Code:

App.java

```
package exp3;

import java.util.ArrayList;

import java.util.List;

public class App {

public static void main(String [] args) {

List<String> tempTxList = new ArrayList<String>();

tempTxList.add("a");

tempTxList.add("b");

tempTxList.add("c");

tempTxList.add("d");

tempTxList.add("e");

MerkleTree merkleTrees = new MerkleTree(tempTxList);

merkleTrees.merkle_tree();

System.out.println("root : " + merkleTrees.getRoot());

}

}
```

MerkleTree.java

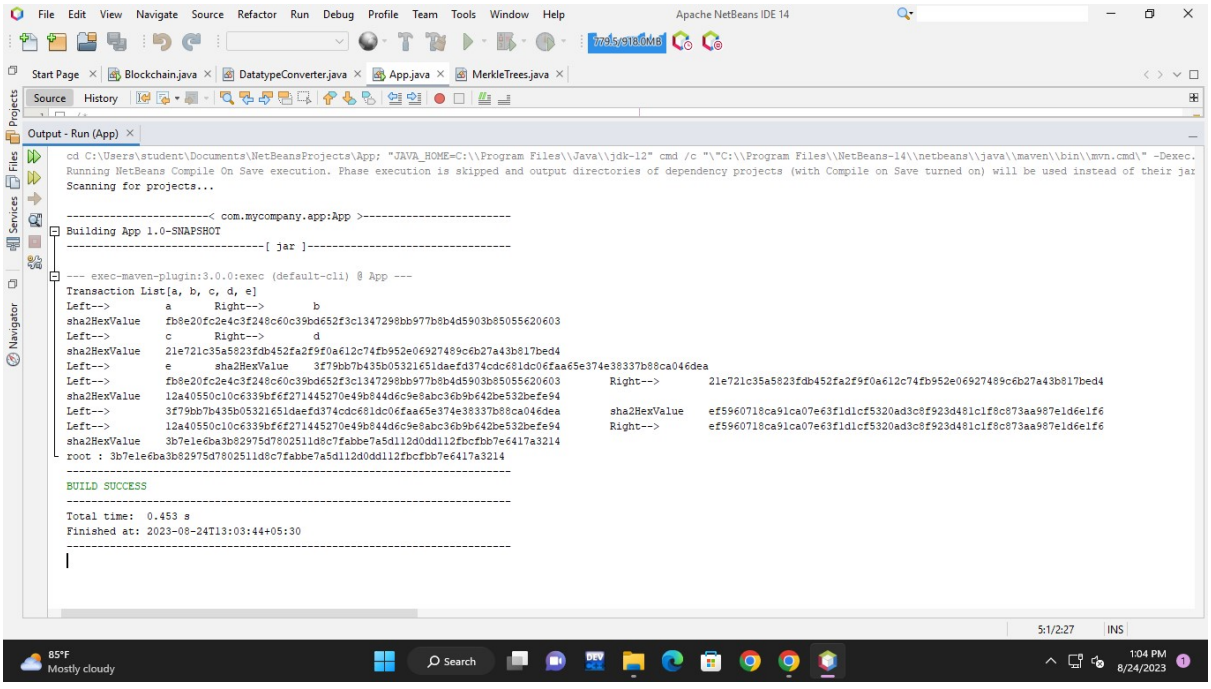
```
package wxp3;

import java.security.MessageDigest;

import java.util.ArrayList;

import java.util.List;

public class MerkleTree {

//transaction List

List<String> txList;

//Merkle Root

String root;

public MerkleTree(List<String> txList) {

this.txList = txList;

root = "";

System.out.println("Transaction List"+this.txList);

}

public void merkle_tree() {

List<String> tempTxList = new ArrayList<String>();

for (int i = 0; i <this.txList.size(); i++) {

tempTxList.add(this.txList.get(i));

}

List<String> newTxList = getNewTxList(tempTxList);
```

```
//Execute the loop until only one hash value is left

while (newTxList.size() != 1) {

newTxList = getNewTxList(newTxList);

}

this.root = newTxList.get(0);

}

private List<String> getNewTxList(List<String> tempTxList) {

List<String> newTxList = new ArrayList<String>();

int index = 0;

while (index <tempTxList.size()) {

//left

String left = tempTxList.get(index);

System.out.print("Left--> \t"+left+ "\t");

index++;

//right

String right = "";

if (index != tempTxList.size()) {

right = tempTxList.get(index);

System.out.print("Right--> \t"+right+"\t");

System.out.println("");
```

```
}

//sha2 hex value

String sha2HexValue = getSHA2HexValue(left + right);

System.out.println("sha2HexValue \t"+sha2HexValue);

newTxList.add(sha2HexValue);

index++;

}

return newTxList;

}

public String getSHA2HexValue(String str) {

byte[] cipher_byte;

try{

MessageDigest md = MessageDigest.getInstance("SHA-256");

md.update(str.getBytes());

cipher_byte = md.digest();

StringBuilder sb = new StringBuilder(2 * cipher_byte.length);

for(byte b: cipher_byte) {

sb.append(String.format("%02x", b&0xff) );

// System.out.println("appended SHA-256 hash is"+sb.toString());

}
```

```
return sb.toString();

} catch (Exception e) {

e.printStackTrace();

}

return "";

}

public String getRoot() {

return this.root;

}

}
```

Output:



Conclusion: The Merkle root serves as a crucial component for ensuring the integrity of transactions within a block. By hashing all transactions in a tree-like structure, any tampering or changes in the transactions will have a ripple effect, altering the root, which serves as an indicator of tampering. This concise hash method allows for quick verification, which is essential for scalability. In the context of proof-of-work mining, the Merkle root simplifies the process and enhances security by reducing the risk of hash collisions. Moreover, it plays a significant role in verifying the inclusion of transactions, maintaining the integrity of blockchain data, and enabling trustless validation. Ultimately, the Merkle root plays a vital role in preserving the reliability and efficiency of blockchain transactions, serving as a foundational element for the overall integrity of the network.