



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**PREPARATION AND CHARACTERIZATION OF NATURAL RUBBER-,
POLYETHYLENE- AND NATURAL RUBBER/POLYETHYLENE-CLAY
NANOCOMPOSITES**

MOHD AIDIL ADHHA BIN ABDULLAH

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NANOCOMPOSITES**

By

MOHD AIDIL ADHHA BIN ABDULLAH

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduates Studies,
Universiti Putra Malaysia, in Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

December 2007



DEDICATION

While this dissertation was in preparation, my beloved father, Abdullah bin Chik, passed away after a lengthy illness. I dedicate this thesis special to him. I also dedicate this dissertation to my beloved family for their prayers and moral support



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Faculty: Science

The present research aims at studying the influence of organoclay on the properties of natural rubber (NR), low density polyethylene (LDPE) and NR/LDPE blend. Two types of clays, namely montmorillonite, (MMT) (cationic clay) and layered double hydroxide (LDH) (anionic clay) were used in this study. Secondly, to identify the influence of the organoclay on the thermal and mechanical properties effectively, a thoroughly investigation of the NR-clay and LDPE-clay single-phase and NR/LDPE-clay blend were performed. These nanocomposites were evaluated by X-ray diffraction (XRD), transmission electron microscopy (TEM), thermogravimetric analysis (TGA) and mechanical properties.

The organo-montmorillonite (OMMT) and organo-LDH (OLDH) samples were prepared via ion exchange reaction using organic surfactants;



cetyltrimethylammonium (CTA), n-dodecyl trimethylammonium (DDT), protonated octadecylamines (ODA) and dodecylamines (DDA) as well as dodecylsulphate (DS). The characterization of organoclay were carried out by the Fourier Transform Infrared spectroscopy (FTIR) and the Carbon, Hydrogen, Nitrogen and Sulphur (CHNS) elemental analysis, Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM) as well as Surface Area and Porosity Analysis (ASAP).

The preparation of a NR nanocomposite may be accomplished either by solvent method or by melt-blending technique. However, the melt-blending technique was applied in this study which is the industrially preferred process. The expansion of the interlayer spacing of the clay indicates the formation of intercalated as well as exfoliated types of nanocomposites which supported by TEM images and XRD diffractograms. Both the tensile strength and the modulus of the nanocomposite increased while elongation at break decreased with the addition of the clay. The Dynamic Mechanical Analysis (DMA) of nanocomposites exhibited enhancement of the storage modulus indicated that the elastic responses of pure NR towards deformation were strongly influenced by the presence of nanodispersed nano-layered material. The thermogravimetric analysis that showed the presence of clay layers in NR matrix gave insignificant improvement in thermal stability of NR-clay nanocomposites.

LDPE-clay nanocomposites were prepared by in-situ grafting-intercalating in melt. The organoclay was first modified with maleic anhydride (MAH). It was then blended with LDPE in melt. The grafting MAH onto LDPE chain favors the exfoliation and intercalation of the organoclay, hence resulting better dispersion of



clay layers in the LDPE matrix. Tensile properties revealed that the tensile strength increased up to 3 parts per hundred polymer by weight (php) while elongation at break decreased with the addition of the clay. Enhancement in storage modulus observed were the characteristic of reinforcing fillers. Thermally stable LDPE-clay nanocomposites were obtained with the increase of the clay content at higher temperature (≥ 400 °C).

Polymer blends with ratio 70/30 amount of LDPE and NR with N, N-m-phenylenebismaleimide (HVA-2) as a compatibilizer was developed. The introduction of cross-links into the elastomer phase has contributed to the improvement of the tensile properties of dynamically vulcanized LDPE/NR blends. These results are supported by scanning electron microscopy (SEM) and Atomic Force Microscopy (AFM) images of extracted surfaces of the blends.

Finally, NR/LDPE-clay nanocomposites were successfully prepared by melt intercalation technique. XRD results revealed the formation of both intercalated and exfoliated nanocomposites. The tensile properties enhanced resulted from melt compounding of NR/LDPE with 3 php or less modified organoclay. All nanocomposites formed in this investigation showed enhancement in the mechanical properties which are the characteristic of reinforcing fillers. The TEM micrograph revealed the clay layers was dominantly distributed in NR domain and manifested by insignificant improvement in thermal stability of the nanocomposites.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**PENYEDIAAN DAN PENCIRIAN NANOKOMPOSIT GETAH ASLI-,
POLIETILENA- DAN GETAH ASLI/ POLIETILENA -TANAH LIAT**

Oleh

MOHD AIDIL ADHHA ABDULLAH

Disember 2007

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Matlamat kajian ini adalah untuk mengetahui kesan penggunaan organo-tanah liat ke atas sifat adunan getah asli (NR), polietilena berketumpatan rendah (LDPE) dan adunan NR/LDPE. Dua jenis tanah liat, iaitu montmorilonit (MMT) (tanah liat bercas positif) dan hidroksida berlapis ganda (LDH) (tanah liat bercas negatif), telah digunakan bagi kajian ini. Keduanya, bagi menentukan kesan organo-tanah liat terhadap sifat termal dan mekanikal secara berkesan, penyiasatan keseluruhan terhadap NR-tanah liat dan LDPE-tanah liat fasa-tunggal dan adunan LDPE/NR-tanah liat dijalankan. Nanokomposit ini kemudiannya dinilai menggunakan pembelauan sinar-X (XRD), mikroskop transmisi elektron (TEM), analisis termogravimetrik (TGA) dan sifat mekanikal.

Sampel organo-montmorillonit (OMMT) dan organo-LDH (OLDH) disediakan melalui tindak balas penukar ion menggunakan surfaktan; setiltrimetilammonium



(CTA), n-dodesiltrimetil ammonium (DDT), oktadesilamina (ODA) dan dodesilamina (DDA) terproton dan juga dodesil sulfat (DS). Pencirian organo-tanah liat dijalankan menggunakan spektroskopi penukar Fourier infra-merah (FTIR), analisis unsur Karbon, Hidrogen, Nitrogen dan Sulfur (CHNS), mikroskop imbasan elektron (SEM) dan juga analisis luas permukaan dan keliangan (ASAP).

Nanokomposit NR boleh disediakan samada dengan menggunakan kaedah pelarut atau kaedah pengadunan leburan. Walau bagaimanapun, kaedah pengadunan leburan diaplikasikan dalam kajian ini kerana ianya merupakan kaedah yang biasa digunakan oleh industri. Pengembangan ruang antara lapisan tanah liat menunjukkan pembentukan nanokomposit jenis interkalasi dan terkelupas yang mana ianya disokong oleh imej TEM dan diffraktogram XRD. Kedua-dua kekuatan tegasan dan modulus bagi nanokomposit meningkat manakala pemanjangan pada takat putus menurun dengan pertambahan tanah liat. Analisis Mekanikal Dinamik bagi nanokomposit menunjukkan peningkatan modulus simpanan yang membuktikan tindak balas kekenyalan NR tulen terhadap canggaan sangat dipengaruhi oleh kehadiran sebaran bahan nano-lapisan. Analisis termogravimetrik menunjukkan kehadiran lapisan tanah liat memberikan peningkatan yang tidak signifikan terhadap kestabilan termal bagi nanokomposit NR-tanah liat.

Nanokomposit LDPE-tanah liat disediakan melalui kaedah *in-situ* cangkukan-interkalasi di dalam leburan. Organo-tanah liat mulanya diubahsuai menggunakan maleik anhidrida (MAH). Ia kemudiannya diadunkan dengan LDPE dalam keadaan lebur. Cangkukan MAH pada rangkaian LDPE menghasilkan organo-tanah liat pengelupasan dan interkalasi dan seterusnya menjadikan sebaran lapisan tanah liat

dalam matrik LDPE lebih baik. Sifat tegasan menunjukkan kekuatan tegasan meningkat sehingga 3 bahagian bagi seratus polimer mengikut berat (php) sementara pemanjangan pada takat putus menurun dengan penambahan tanah liat. Peningkatan modulus simpanan yang diperhatikan menunjukkan ciri-ciri bagi pengisi penguat. Nanokomposit LDPE-tanah liat berkestabilan termal diperolehi dengan peningkatan kandungan tanah liat pada suhu yang lebih tinggi ($\geq 400\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$).

Adunan polimer dengan nisbah kandungan 70/30 LDPE dan NR bersama N, N-m-fenilnibismalemid (HVA-2) sebagai pengserasi telah dibangunkan. Pengenalal rangkaian silang kepada fasa elastomer telah menyumbang kepada peningkatan sifat tegangan bagi komposit adunan pemvulkanan dinamik NR/LDPE. Keputusan ini disokong oleh imej yang diperolehi dengan mikroskop pengimbasan elektron (SEM) dan mikroskop daya pegas (AFM) bagi sampel adunan setelah pengestrakan permukaan dilakukan.

Akhirnya, nanokomposit NR/LDPE-tanah liat telah berjaya disediakan melalui keadah pengadunan leburan. Keputusan XRD menunjukkan pembentukan kedua-dua jenis nanokomposit interkalasi dan terkelupas. Sifat tegasan meningkat hasil daripada pengadunan leburan bagi NR/LDPE dengan 3 php atau kurang organo-tanah liat. Kesemua nanokomposit yang terhasil dalam ujikaji ini menunjukkan peningkatan sifat mekanikal yang mana ia merupakan ciri bagi pengisi penguat. Mikrograf TEM menunjukkan lapisan tanah liat mendominasi fasa NR merupakan punca kepada peningkatan yang tidak signifikan terhadap kestabilan termal bagi nanokomposit.

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I certify that an Examination Committee met on 28 December 2007 to conduct the final examination of Mohd Aidil Adhha bin Abdullah on his Doctor of Philosophy thesis entitled” Preparation and characterization of Natural Rubber-, Polyethylene- and Natural Rubber/Polyethylene-Clay Nanocomposites” in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulation 1981. The committee recommends that the candidate be awarded the relevant degree. Members of the Examination Committee are as follows:

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations, which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at UPM or any other institutions.

MOHD AIDIL ADHHA ABDULLAH

Date: 19 February 2008



TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|-------------|
| DEDICATION | ii |
| ABSTRACT | iii |
| ABSTRAK | vi |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | ix |
| APPROVAL | xi |
| DECLARATION | xiii |
| LIST OF TABLES | xviii |
| LIST OF FIGURES | xx |
| LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS | xxx |
| | |
| CHAPTER | |
| | |
| 1 INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| 1.1 Clay reinforced polymer | 2 |
| 1.2 Polymer-Clay nanocomposites | 3 |
| 1.3 Thermoplastic elastomer (TPE) | 5 |
| 1.4 Research Approach | 5 |
| 1.5 Objectives | 6 |
| | |
| 2 LITERATURE REVIEW | 7 |
| 2.1 Natural Rubber | 7 |
| 2.1.1 Chemical structure | 7 |
| 2.1.2 Standard Malaysia Rubber- Viscosity stabilized (SMR CV) | 10 |
| 2.1.3 Vulcanization of Natural Rubber | 12 |
| 2.1.4 Application of Natural Rubber | 16 |
| 2.2 Polyethylene | 16 |
| 2.3 Natural Rubber/Polyethylene blend | 18 |
| 2.4 Clay | 19 |
| 2.4.1 Cationic clay | 20 |
| 2.4.2 Anionic clay | 23 |
| 2.4.3 Ion Exchange process | 26 |
| 2.5 Polymer Nanocomposites | 27 |
| 2.5.1 Polymer-clay nanocomposites | 28 |
| 2.5.2 Preparation of polymer-clay nanocomposites | 30 |
| 2.5.3 Characterization of Polymer-Clay Structure | 32 |
| 2.5.4 Properties of nanocomposites | 34 |
| 2.5.4.1 Tensile properties | 35 |
| 2.5.4.2 Elongation at break | 36 |
| 2.5.4.3 Dynamic Mechanical Analysis | 37 |
| 2.5.4.4 Thermal Stability | 38 |
| 2.5.5 Natural Rubber nanocomposites | 39 |
| 2.5.6 Polyethylene-Clay nanocomposites | 40 |
| 2.5.7 Polymer blend-Clay nanocomposites | 41 |



| | | |
|----------|---|-----------|
| 3 | MATERIAL AND METHOD | 43 |
| 3.1 | Material and equipments | 43 |
| 3.2 | Preparation of organo-montmorillonite (OMMT) | 46 |
| 3.3 | Preparation of layered double hydroxide (LDH) | 48 |
| 3.3.1 | Preparation of hydrophilic LDH (HLDH) | 49 |
| 3.3.2 | Preparation of organo-LDH (OLDH) | 51 |
| 3.4 | Preparation of modified organoclay | 52 |
| 3.5 | Preparation of Nanocomposites | 52 |
| 3.5.1 | Preparation of Natural Rubber-Clay composites | 52 |
| 3.5.1.1 | Solvent Casting Method | 52 |
| 3.5.1.2 | Melt Intercalation Method | 54 |
| 3.5.2 | Preparation of LDPE-Clay nanocomposites | 54 |
| 3.5.2.1 | Melt Intercalation Method | 54 |
| 3.5.2.2 | In-situ grafting-intercalating method | 55 |
| 3.5.3 | Preparation of Polyethylene/Natural Rubber Blends | 55 |
| 3.5.4 | Preparation of LDPE/NR-Clay nanocomposites | 57 |
| 3.6 | Characterization of clay and nanocomposites | 57 |
| 3.6.1 | X-ray Diffraction | 57 |
| 3.6.2 | Fourier Transform Infra-Red | 58 |
| 3.6.3 | Elemental analysis | 58 |
| 3.6.4 | Surface area and porosity | 59 |
| 3.6.5 | Thermogravimetric Analysis | 59 |
| 3.6.6 | Rheometry | 59 |
| 3.6.7 | Scanning Electron Microscopy | 60 |
| 3.6.8 | Atomic Force Microscopy | 60 |
| 3.6.9 | Transmission Electron Microscopy | 60 |
| 3.6.10 | Tensile Properties Measurements | 61 |
| 3.6.11 | Dynamic Mechanical Analysis | 61 |
| 3.6.12 | Swelling Index Measurement | 62 |
| 4 | RESULTS AND DISCUSSION I: PREPARATION AND CHARACTERIZATION OF ORGANOCLAY | 63 |
| 4.1 | Preparation of organo-montmorillonite (OMMT) | 63 |
| 4.2 | Preparation of organo-LDH (OLDH) | 64 |
| 4.3 | Characterization of Organoclay | 65 |
| 4.3.1 | X- Ray Diffraction Analysis | 65 |
| 4.3.2 | Elemental Analysis | 68 |
| 4.3.3 | Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) | 71 |
| 4.3.4 | Surfactant arrangement in the interlayer | 75 |
| 4.3.5 | Surface Properties | 76 |
| 4.3.6 | Surface morphology | 84 |
| 4.3.7 | Thermogravimetric Analysis | 92 |
| 4.3.8 | Modification of organoclay | 101 |
| 4.4 | Summary | 105 |



| | | |
|----------|---|------------|
| 5 | RESULTS AND DISCUSSION II: NATURAL RUBBER-CLAY NANOCOMPOSITES | 106 |
| 5.1 | Preparation of Natural Rubber-Clay Nanocomposites | 106 |
| 5.2 | Comparative studies of solvent casting and melt intercalation method | 106 |
| 5.2.1 | X-Ray Diffractogram | 107 |
| 5.2.2 | Tensile properties | 109 |
| 5.3 | Characterization of Natural Rubber-Clay Nanocomposites | 111 |
| 5.3.1 | Vulcanizations characteristics | 111 |
| 5.3.2 | Swelling Index | 115 |
| 5.3.3 | Analysis of the clay dispersion | 115 |
| 5.3.4 | Tensile Properties | 128 |
| 5.3.5 | DMA Properties | 133 |
| 5.3.6 | Thermogravimetric Analysis | 140 |
| 5.4 | Summary | 145 |
| 6 | RESULTS AND DISCUSSION III: POLYETHYLENE-CLAY NANOCOMPOSITES | 146 |
| 6.1 | Preparation of Polyethylene-Clay Nanocomposites | 146 |
| 6.2 | Characterization of LDPE-Organoclay nanocomposites | 148 |
| 6.2.1 | Analysis of clay dispersion | 148 |
| 6.2.2 | Fourier Transform Infrared Analysis | 153 |
| 6.2.3 | Tensile Properties | 156 |
| 6.2.4 | DMA Properties | 158 |
| 6.2.5 | Thermogravimetric Analysis. | 162 |
| 6.3 | Summary | 172 |
| 7 | RESULTS AND DISCUSSION IV: POLYETHYLENE/NATURAL RUBBER-CLAY NANOCOMPOSITES | 175 |
| 7.1 | Preparation of Polyethylene/Natural Rubber Blend | 175 |
| 7.1.1 | Effect of HVA-2 on Tensile strength of Polyethylene/Natural Rubber Blend | 175 |
| 7.1.2 | Swelling Index | 176 |
| 7.1.3 | Surface Morphology | 178 |
| 7.1.4 | Dynamic Mechanical Analysis | 182 |
| 7.2 | Preparation of LDPE/NR-Clay Nanocomposites | 186 |
| 7.3 | Characterization of LDPE/NR-Clay nanocomposites | 186 |
| 7.3.1 | Analysis of clay dispersion | 186 |
| 7.3.2 | Tensile properties | 191 |
| 7.3.3 | Dynamic Mechanical Analysis | 195 |
| 7.3.4 | Thermogravimetric Analysis | 201 |
| 7.4 | Summary | 210 |
| 8 | CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER STUDIES | 212 |
| 8.1 | Conclusion | 212 |
| 8.2 | Recommendations for Further Studies | 217 |
| | BIBLIOGRAPHY | 219 |
| | APPENDICES | 233 |



BIODATA OF THE AUTHOR
LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

240
241



LIST OF TABLES

| Table | | Page |
|--------------|--|-------------|
| 2.1 | Subgrade of SMR CV and producer limits on Mooney viscosity | 11 |
| 2.2 | Properties of SMR-CV (Nair, 1975) | 11 |
| 2.3 | Type of non-sulfur crosslinking agents (RRIM, 1979) | 13 |
| 3.1 | List of chemicals and their manufacturers | 43 |
| 3.2 | List of equipments and their manufacturers | 45 |
| 3.3 | Name, abbreviation and structure of ionic surfactants used to prepare organoclay | 47 |
| 3.4 | Formulation of intercalatant, distilled water and hydrochloric acid in the preparation of OMMT | 48 |
| 3.5 | Amount of NR and organoclay used in preparing the nanocomposites | 53 |
| 3.6 | Formulation for vulcanization of natural rubber composite | 53 |
| 3.7 | The formulation of LDPE composites | 55 |
| 3.8 | Amount of HVA-2 used in study of preparation of 70/30 LDPE/NR blends | 56 |
| 3.9 | Ingredients for preparation of 70/30 LDPE/NR/organoclay blend | 57 |
| 4.1 | Basal spacing of Na-MMT, CTA-MMT, DDT MMT, DDA-MMT and ODA-MMT | 67 |
| 4.2 | Basal spacing of HLDH and OLDH | 69 |
| 4.3 | The total carbon content and the amount of surfactants intercalated in the MMT | 70 |
| 4.4 | The carbon, nitrogen and sulfur content in LDH | 70 |
| 4.5 | Band assignment of FTIR spectra of Na-MMT, CTA-MMT, DDT-MMT, DDA-MMT and ODA-MMT | 73 |



| | | |
|------|---|-----|
| 4.6 | Summary of gallery height, surfactant and orientation of surfactant molecule for organophilic clays | 76 |
| 4.7 | Surface properties of Na-MMT, CTA-MMT, DDT-MMT, DDA-MMT, ODA-MMT, HLDH and OLDH | 77 |
| 4.8 | Total weight loss for each step of the decomposition of MMT obtained from Figs. 4.24 - 4.28 | 98 |
| 4.9 | The summary of major species evolved from each decomposition step of MMT sample | 98 |
| 4.10 | Basal spacing of organoclay and modified organoclay | 104 |
| 5.1 | 2θ and interlayer distance of composites NR-CTA-MMT and NR-ODA-MMT | 109 |
| 5.2 | Scorch time and torque values of NR and composite of NR-MMT and NR-LDH | 112 |
| 5.3 | Swelling index of composites NR-MMT | 116 |
| 5.4 | Swelling index of composites NR-LDH | 116 |
| 5.5 | Basal spacing of MMT, LDH and its composites | 120 |
| 5.6 | Effect of clay content on storage modulus of NR-Clay nanocomposites | 138 |
| 5.7 | Effect of clay content on thermal stability of NR-Clay nanocomposites | 144 |
| 6.1 | Effect of clay content on $\tan \delta$ of LDPE-clay nanocomposites | 164 |
| 6.2 | Effect of clay content on thermal degradation of LDPE-clay composites | 173 |
| 7.1 | Swelling index of 70/30 PE/NR blend with various content of HVA-2 | 178 |
| 7.2 | Interlayer spacing of MOMMT, OMMT, MOLDH and OLDH after blend with LDPE and NR | 190 |
| 7.3 | DMA properties of LDPE/NR nanocomposites | 200 |
| 7.4 | Effect of clay content on thermal degradation of LDPE/NR-clay nanocomposites | 210 |



LIST OF FIGURES

| Figure | | Page |
|--------|---|------|
| 1.1 | Schematic illustration of three types of polymer (nano)composites (Qutubuddin and Fu, 2001) | 4 |
| 2.1 | The relationship between monomer and polymer structure of isoprene | 8 |
| 2.2 | <i>Cis</i> configuration of 1,4-polyisoprene | 8 |
| 2.3 | <i>Trans</i> configuration of 1,4-polyisoprene | 9 |
| 2.4 | Steps in vulcanization process (RRIM,1979) | 14 |
| 2.5 | Structure features of vulcanizate network Mono (a), di- (b) and polysulfidic (c) crosslinks | 15 |
| 2.6 | Structures of polyethylene | 17 |
| 2.7 | Three dimensional polyhedra of 2:1 layer silicate assembling. (Moore, 1989) | 21 |
| 2.8 | Idealized 3D structure of montmorillonite (Gianellis, 1996) | 22 |
| 2.9 | 3 Dimension structure of Mg^{2+} octahedrally surrounded by six OH- anion (a) and the different octahedral share edges to form infinite sheets (brucite layer) | 25 |
| 2.10 | Structure of layered double hydroxides (You <i>et al.</i> 2001) | 25 |
| 2.11 | Alkyl chain aggregations in 2:1 clay minerals: monolayers (a), bilayers (b), and pseudotrimolecular layers (c) of chains lying flat on the surface, and paraffin-type monolayers (d) (Lagaly, 1986) | 28 |
| 3.1 | Apparatus set up for preparation of organoclay | 49 |
| 3.2 | Apparatus set up for self-assembly method | 50 |
| 4.1 | XRD patterns of Na-MMT (a) and tertiary amines treated MMT, CTA-MMT (b) and DDT-MMT (c) | 66 |
| 4.2 | XRD patterns of Na-MMT (a) and primary amines treated MMT, DDA-MMT (b) and ODA-MMT (c) | 66 |



| | | |
|----------|--|----|
| 4.3 | XRD Patterns of LDH with nitrate as interlayer anion, HLDH (a) and LDH with dodecylsulphate as a guest anion, OLDH (b) | 69 |
| 4.4 | FTIR spectra of Na-MMT (a) and MMT treated with tertiary amines; CTA-MMT(b), and DDT-MMT (c) | 72 |
| 4.5 | FTIR spectra of Na-MMT (a) and primary amines treated MMT; ODA-MMT(b), and DDT-MMT (c) | 72 |
| 4.6 | FTIR spectra of LDH with nitrate as interlayer anion, HLDH (a) and LDH treated with DS, OLDH (b) | 74 |
| 4.7 | Schematic representation of surfactant arrangement | 77 |
| 4.8 | Adsorption–desorption isotherms of Na-MMT (a) and CTA-MMT (b) | 79 |
| 4.9 | Adsorption–desorption isotherms of Na-MMT (a) and DDT-MMT (b) | 79 |
| 4.10 | Adsorption–desorption isotherms of Na-MMT (a) and DDA-MMT (b) | 80 |
| 4.11 | Adsorption–desorption isotherms of Na-MMT (a) and ODA-MMT (b) | 80 |
| 4.12 | Pore size distribution of Na-MMT (a) and CTA-MMT (b) | 81 |
| 4.13 | Pore size distribution of Na-MMT (a) and DDT-MMT (b) | 81 |
| 4.14 | Pore size distribution of Na-MMT (a) and DDA-MMT (b) | 82 |
| 4.15 | Pore size distribution of Na-MMT (a) and ODA-MMT (b) | 82 |
| 4.16 | Adsorption–desorption isotherms of HLDH (a) and OLDH (b) | 83 |
| 4.17 | Pore size distribution of HLDH (a) and OLDH (b) | 83 |
| 4.18 (a) | SEM micrograph for Na-MMT at low magnification (1000X) | 85 |
| 4.18 (b) | SEM micrograph for Na-MMT at high magnification (8000X) | 85 |
| 4.19 (a) | SEM micrograph for CTA-MMT at low magnification (1000X) | 86 |



| | | |
|----------|---|-----|
| 4.19 (b) | SEM micrograph for CTA-MMT at high magnification (5000X) | 86 |
| 4.20 (a) | SEM micrograph for DDA-MMT at low magnification (1000X) | 87 |
| 4.20 (b) | SEM micrograph for DDA-MMT high magnification (5000X) | 87 |
| 4.21 (a) | SEM micrograph for ODA-MMT at low magnification (1000X) | 88 |
| 4.21 (b) | SEM micrograph for ODA-MMT at high magnification (5000X) | 88 |
| 4.22 (a) | SEM micrograph for DDT-MMT at low magnification (1000X) | 89 |
| 4.22 (b) | SEM micrograph for DDT-MMT at high Magnification (8000X) | 89 |
| 4.23 (a) | SEM micrograph for OLDH at low magnification (1000X) | 90 |
| 4.23 (b) | SEM micrograph for OLDH at and high magnification (8000X) | 90 |
| 4.24 (a) | SEM micrograph for HLDH at low magnification (1000X) | 91 |
| 4.24 (b) | SEM micrograph for HLDH at high magnification (5000X) | 91 |
| 4.25 | TGA and DTG thermograms of Na-MMT | 93 |
| 4.26 | TGA and DTG thermograms of CTA-MMT | 93 |
| 4.27 | TGA and DTG thermograms of DDT-MMT | 94 |
| 4..28 | TGA and DTG thermograms of DDA-MMT | 94 |
| 4.29 | TGA and DTG thermograms of ODA-MMT | 95 |
| 4.30 | TGA and DTG thermograms of HLDH | 100 |
| 4.31 | TGA and DTG thermograms of OLDH | 100 |
| 4.32 | XRD diffractograms of CTA-MMT (a) and MCTA-MMT (b) | 102 |
| 4.33 | XRD diffractograms of DDA-MMT (a) and MDDA-MMT (b) | 102 |



| | | |
|------|---|-----|
| 4.34 | XRD diffractograms of ODA-MMT (a) and MODA-MMT (b) | 103 |
| 4.35 | XRD diffractograms of DDT-MMT (a) and MDDT-MMT (b) | 103 |
| 4.36 | XRD diffractograms of OLDH (a) and MOLDH (b) | 104 |
| 5.1 | XRD diffractograms of CTA-MMT and its composites with NR (5 phr) prepared by solvent and melt intercalation methods | 108 |
| 5.2 | XRD diffractograms of ODA-MMT and its composites with NR (5 phr) prepared by solvent and melt intercalation methods | 108 |
| 5.3 | Tensile properties of nanocomposites of NR-CTA-MMT prepared by solvent and melt intercalation technique | 110 |
| 5.4 | Tensile properties of nanocomposites of NR-ODA-MMT prepared by solvent and melt intercalation technique | 110 |
| 5.5 | Torque value of the NR with Na-MMT (a), CTA-MMT (b), DDT-MMT (c) DDA-MMT (d) and ODA-MMT (e) | 114 |
| 5.6 | Torque value of the NR with HLDH (a) and OLDH (b) | 114 |
| 5.7 | X-ray diffractograms of nanocomposites of NR-CTA-MMT | 118 |
| 5.8 | X-ray diffractograms of nanocomposites of NR-ODA- MMT | 118 |
| 5.9 | X-ray diffractograms of nanocomposites of NR-DDT-MMT | 119 |
| 5.10 | X-ray diffractograms of nanocomposites of NR-DDA-MMT | 119 |
| 5.11 | X-ray diffractograms of nanocomposites of NR-OLDH | 122 |
| 5.12 | X-ray diffractograms of nanocomposites of NR-HLDH | 122 |
| 5.13 | X-ray diffractograms of nanocomposites of NR-Na-MMT | 123 |
| 5.14 | TEM image of NR-ODA-MMT (1phr) nanocomposites at high magnification | 124 |
| 5.15 | TEM images of NR-clay nanocomposites (3 phr) at low magnification. NR-ODA-MMT (a), NR-DDA-MMT (b), NR-CTA-MMT (c) NR- DDT-MMT and NR-OLDH (e) | 125 |



| | | |
|------|---|-----|
| 5.16 | TEM images of NR-clay (3 phr) nanocomposites at high magnification (25,000X) (a) NR-ODA-MMT, (b) NR-CTA-MMT, (c) NR-DDA-MMT, (d) NR-DDT-MMT and (e) NR-OLDH | 126 |
| 5.17 | TEM images of NR-Clay (7 phr) nanocomposites at low magnification NR-CTA-MMT (a), NR-ODA-MMT (b) and NR-HLDH (c) | 127 |
| 5.18 | TEM images of NR-clay macrocomposites (3phr), NR-Na-MMT (a) and NR-HLDH (b) | 128 |
| 5.19 | Effect of clay content on tensile strength of NR-OMMT composites | 129 |
| 5.20 | Effect of clay content on 300% modulus of NR-clay composites | 130 |
| 5.21 | Effect of clay content on 500% modulus of NR-clay composites | 130 |
| 5.22 | Effect of clay content on elongation at break of NR-clay composites | 132 |
| 5.23 | Tensile strength of NR/LDH composites | 132 |
| 5.24 | Modulus at 300% of NR/LDH nanocomposites | 134 |
| 5.25 | Modulus at 500% of NR/LDH nanocomposites | 134 |
| 5.26 | Effect of clay content on elongation at break of NR/LDH composites | 135 |
| 5.27 | Storage modulus of NR/CTA-MMT at various clay contents. Pure NR (a), 3 phr (b), 5 phr (c) and 10 phr (d) | 136 |
| 5.28 | Storage modulus of NR/DDT-MMT at various clay contents. Pure NR (a), 3 phr (b), 5 phr (c) and 10 phr (d) | 136 |
| 5.29 | Storage modulus of NR/DDA-MMT at various clay contents. Pure NR (a), 3 phr (b), 5 phr (c) and 10 phr (d) | 137 |
| 5.30 | Storage modulus of NR/DDA-MMT at various clay contents. Pure NR (a), 3 phr (b), 5 phr (c) and 10 phr (d) | 137 |
| 5.31 | Storage modulus of NR/OLDH at various clay contents. Pure NR (a), 3 phr (b), 5 phr (c) and 10 phr (d) | 138 |
| 5.32 | Tangent delta of NR nanocomposites with various organoclay at 5 pphr | 140 |

