Reactive compatibilization effect of graphene oxide reinforced butyl rubber nanocomposites

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Abstract

The objective of this work is to develop graphene oxide (GO) incorporated butyl rubber (IIR) nanocomposites by three different methods: direct addition approach (DAAM), single step method (SSM) and two step method (TSM). Chlorobutyl rubber was used as a compatibilizer in SSM and TSM. Mechanical properties of developed nanocomposites was increased and gas permeability co-efficient was decreased up on addition of GO content in IIR matrix. Maximum technical properties was achieved for the nanocomposite with 1.6 wt.% of GO in all methods was achieved due to better interfacial bonding with IIR matrix. When GO content increases above 1.6 wt.% in IIR matrix leads to agglomeration which resulted in deterioration of mechanical properties. HR-TEM studies revealed that nanocomposites prepared by TSM shows exfoliated structure of GO in IIR matrix due to homogenous distribution when compared to the nanocomposites prepared with DAAM and SSM.

Keywords: butyl rubber; graphene oxide; nanocomposite; mechanical.

1. Introduction

Nanocomposites are currently used in several fields and new applications are being continuously developed like innerwalls of tires, thin film capacitors for computer chips, O-rings, ball bladders, fiber optic compounds, hand gloves, impellers blades and food packaging, etc. Nanocomposites are materials which fused with nano-sized elements in the matrix to increase the macroscopic properties. The introduction of nanoscale, distribution of filler or measured nanostructures in the base matrix with high surface to volume ratio can enhance the physico-mechanical properties and unique functional behaviours of base material.

Rubber nanocomposites is one of the composites which were developed by several researchers around the world using different rubbers such as natural rubber (NR), butadiene rubber (BR), butyl rubber (IIR), chlorobutyl rubber (CIIR), epoxidized natural rubber (ENR), styrene butadiene rubber (SBR), styrene butadiene styrene rubber (SBS) and nitrile butadiene rubber (NBR) for various applications. Even though IIR has its own merits and its property was enhanced with reinforcement of various nanosized fillers such as carbon black (CB), silica, carbon nanotubes, graphene, graphene oxide (GO) and nanoclay. Amongst, GO is one of the filler utilized to improve the mechanical and gas barrier properties of IIR rubber compounds. This work aims to develop IIR nanocomposites by reinforcing GO in presence and absence of compatibilizer using DAAM, SSM and TSM. Mechanical and gas permeability properties of the prepared nanocomposites were evaluated and the properties of the nanocomposites was compared against the preparation method. CIIR was used as a compatibilizer in this work to achieve uniform dispersion of GO in the IIR matrix.

2. Materials

Butyl rubber and chlorobutyl with 1.25% of chlorine was purchased from Laxnness and Bayer, Mumbai. Graphene oxide with a bulk density of 1.8 g/cm³ and soluble in polar solvents was procured from Sigma Aldrich chemicals, Mumbai. Remaining chemicals like sulphur, zinc oxide, stearic acid, N-cyclohexyl-2-benzothiazyl sulphenamide (CBS) and tetramethylthiuram disulphide (TMTD) were obtained from Loba Chemicals, Chennai.

3. Development of Composite

Nanocomposite were prepared with and without compatibilizer. Nanocomposite without compatibilizer was developed by directly mixing of GO with rubber.
Table 1. Formulation of rubber nanocomposites.

| Components  | CN | IIR Nanocomposites(without compatibilizer) | IIR Nanocomposites(with compatibilizer) |
|-------------|----|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
|             |    | Single step mixing method | Two step mixing method |
|             |    | parts per hundred rubber of weight (phr) | parts per hundred rubber of weight (phr) |
| IIR (g)     | 100| D1 | D2 | D3 | D4 | D5 | S1 | S2 | S3 | S4 | S5 | T1 | T2 | T3 | T4 | T5 |
| CIIR (g)    |    | -  | -  | -  | -  | 1.6| 3.2| 4.8| 6.4| 8  | -  | -  | -  | -  | -  | -  |
| GO (g)      | -  | 0.4| 0.8| 1.2| 1.6| 2  | 0.4| 0.8| 1.2| 1.6| 2  | -  | -  | -  | -  | -  |
| CHR-GO films| -  | -  | -  | -  | -  | -  | -  | -  | -  | -  | -  | -  | -  | -  | -  | -  |
| Stearic Acid | 2 | 2  | 2  | 2  | 2  | 2  | 2  | 2  | 2  | 2  | 2  | 2  | 2  | 2  | 2  | 2  |
| CBS         | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  |
| ZnO         | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  |
| TMTD        | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  |
| Sulphur     | 1.5| 1.5| 1.5| 1.5| 1.5| 1.5| 1.5| 1.5| 1.5| 1.5| 1.5| 1.5| 1.5| 1.5| 1.5| 1.5|

CN, D1 to D5, S1 to S5 and T1 to T5 indicates the specimen code for the prepared composites.
%E was reduced up on addition of GO content in IIR matrix. TS, TES and modulus at 100 and 300% of nanocomposites prepared with SSM (S4) was increased by 56%, 7.6%, 48% and 59% respectively and %E was reduced by 37% when compared with pure IIR.

Similarly, mechanical properties of nanocomposites prepared with TSM (T4) were enhanced by 63%, 23%, 70% and 59% respectively and %E was reduced by 40% when compared to pure IIR. Addition of compatibilier through solution mixing helps in achieving uniform dispersion of GO in IIR matrix. Uniform distribution of GO in IIR matrix leads to form intercalated structure and strong interfacial bonding. So, nanocomposites prepared by TSM shows superior mechanical properties when compared to nanocomposites prepared by other two methods (DAAM and SSM). Mechanical properties starts to deteriorate when reinforcement of GO content increases to 2 wt.% in IIR matrix (D5, S5 and T5) for the nanocomposites prepared by all three methods. Increment in the GO content above 1.6 wt. % in the developed nanocomposites (all methods) leads to form agglomeration of GO in the matrix which produced the stress concentration on the matrix and decreased the TS, TES, modulus.

5.2 Gas permeability co-efficient

Gas barrier properties of the prepared nanocomposites were evaluated by determining the GPC. GPC values of the nanocomposites prepared using all the three methods were depicted in Figure 5.

GPC of nanocomposites prepared with all three methods (DAAM, SSM and TSM) decreases upon addition of GO content in IIR matrix. Nanocomposites prepared with 1.6 wt.% of GO (D4, S4 and T4) in all three methods shows lower GPC when compared to other samples. GPC of the nanocomposites D4, S4 and T4 was reduced by 25%, 31% and 36% respectively when compared to pure IIR. Lower GPC was observed for T4 due to even distribution of GO in IIR matrix. Even distribution of GO in IIR matrix was achieved through TSM which leads to strong interfacial bonding thereby reduces the passage of nitrogen gas. GPC was increased when GO content increases from 1.6 wt.% to 2wt.% (D5, S5 and T5). It is due to agglomeration of GO in IIR matrix which leads to decrease in interfacial bonding between the matrix.
nanocomposites. Found to be a suitable method to develop graphene oxide using two step method (TSM) in presence of compatibilizer was confirmed thorough HR-TEM analysis. Increase in properties (TS, TES and modulus at 100% and 300%) and SSM, interactions between IIR and GO were weak due to lower interfacial bonding caused discontinuous phase of GO in IIR matrix (Figure 6a, b) which affects the properties of nanocomposites. Even distribution of GO in IIR matrix leads to better interaction and continuous phase during mixing process of TSM (Figure 6c) and leads exfoliation of GO in matrix of nanocomposites.

6. Conclusion

Graphene oxide nanocomposites was successfully developed in presence and absence of compatibilizer using three different methods (DAAM, SSM and TSM). Morphological studies, mechanical properties and GPC of prepared nanocomposites were examined and properties were compared to identify the suitable method for preparing nanocomposites. Nanocomposites (T4) prepared using TSM with compatibilizer exhibited higher mechanical properties (TS, TES and modulus at 100% and 300%) and less GPC when compared to nanocomposite (D4 and S4) prepared with other methods. Enhancement in properties was achieved due to even dispersion of GO in IIR matrix and confirmed thorough HR-TEM analysis. Increase in weight content of GO in IIR matrix from 1.6 wt.% to 2 wt.% leads to agglomeramation which resulted in deterioration of TS, TES and modulus of nanocomposite (D5, S5 and T5) prepared in all three methods. From the above results two step method (TSM) in presence of compatibilizer was found to be a suitable method to develop graphene oxide nanocomposites.

7. References

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Received: June 19, 2020
Revised: Sept. 21, 2020
Accepted: Sept. 25, 2020