### **Electronic Supporting Information (ESI)**

## Cu-Mn spinel oxide catalyzed synthesis of imidazo[1,2a]pyridines through domino three-component coupling and 5-exo-dig cyclization in water <sup>¤</sup>

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#### S1. Characterization of Cu-Mn catalysts

#### S1.a. XRD of Cu-Mn catalysts

The powder X-ray diffraction patterns of samples were recorded on X-ray diffractometer using Ni filter and Gobel Mirror parallel beam geometry (CuK $\alpha$  :  $\lambda = 0.15418$  nm) in the 2 $\theta$  range 10-750 in step scan mode (Step Size: 0.020, Scan Speed: 2 s/step). The phases were identified by search match procedure with the help of DIFFRAC PLUS software using JCPDS databank.

It was found that kind of phase/s make the largest contribution to perform the main role of catalyst. The powder X-ray diffraction (XRD) of the catalysts shown in Fig 1 and the following phases were identified with the 2 theta values such as; Tenorite, (CuO): 35.490, 35.550, 38.730 and 48.760; Copper Manganese Oxide (Cu1.4Mn1.6O4): 30.420, 35.880, 43.560 and 57.600; Hausmannite, (Mn3O4): 18.000, 28.880, 32.31 and 36.080; Manganese Chloride Hydrate, (MnCl<sub>2</sub>.2H<sub>2</sub>O): 15.710, 20.170, 30.570 and 32.000 and Crednerite, (CuMn<sub>2</sub>O4): 31.360, 33.020, 35.300, 36.960 and 51.780. Each phase marked in the Fig 1. XRD studies of the catalysts revealed that activity of the samples calcined at 425 oC might be due to the surface interaction of the two oxides because of formation of following bimetallic spinel such as CuMn<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub> and CuxMn<sub>3</sub>-xO<sub>4</sub> (x = 1.4–1.6).

Catalyst	Composition (Cu: Mn molar ratio)	Phases present <sup>a</sup>
Cu-Mn catalyst A	2:0.25	Tenorite (CuO); Copper Manganese Oxide (Cu1.4Mn1.6O <sub>4</sub> ); Hausmannite, (Mn <sub>3</sub> O <sub>4</sub> ); Manganese Chloride Hydrate, (MnCl <sub>2</sub> $\cdot$ 2H <sub>2</sub> O); Crednerite (CuMn <sub>2</sub> O <sub>4</sub> )
Cu-Mn catalyst <b>B</b>	1:0.25	Tenorite (CuO); Copper Manganese Oxide (Cu1.4Mn1.6O <sub>4</sub> ); Hausmannite, (Mn <sub>3</sub> O <sub>4</sub> ); Manganese Chloride Hydrate, (MnCl <sub>2</sub> $\cdot$ 2H <sub>2</sub> O); Crednerite (CuMn <sub>2</sub> O <sub>4</sub> )
Cu-Mn catalyst C	3:0.25	Tenorite (CuO); Copper Manganese Oxide (Cu1.4Mn1.6O <sub>4</sub> )

Table S1	. Results of XRD	for the Cu-Mn	spinel oxide	(A-C)
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<sup>*a*</sup> Phases are identified by a search match procedure with the help of DIFFRACPLUS software using JCPDS databank.



**Figure S1.** Powder X-ray diffraction (XRD) of the catalyst (a) Cu-Mn catalysts **A** and **B** (b) XRD of Cu-Mn catalyst **C**. (Tenorite: Tn, Copper Manganese Oxide: C-M, Hausmannite: Hu, Manganese Chloride Hydrate: M-H, Crednerite: Cr)

#### S1.b. Surface area of Cu-Mn catalysts

Specific surface areas of the Cu-Mn catalysts A-C were measured with  $N_2$  adsorption using chemisorptions instrument and results are presented in Table S2.

Catalysts	Specific surface area (m <sup>2</sup> /g)
Cu-Mn catalyst A	42.07
Cu-Mn catalyst <b>B</b>	49.79
Cu-Mn catalyst C	46.62

#### S1.c. Scanning electron micrograph (SEM) of Cu-Mn catalysts

Scanning electron micrograph (SEM) of the samples was taken with an ASID attached to electron microscope at a magnification of about 15000 times. The accelerate voltage of 40 kv was applied. The image shows that the materials are composed of aggregates of near spherical nanoparticles and presented in a nanosize structure. This type of morphology showed the presence of a large number of adsorption sites in the materials which in part contribute to the high catalytic activity.3 SEM patterns as shown in Fig 2 represents the before use and after use Cu-Mn spinel oxide (B). The SEM image of used catalyst was taken after third run and after each run catalyst (Cu-Mn spinel oxide B) was calcined at 425 °C. These nano-spherical particles have appeared almost same as fresh catalyst after regeneration. It can be seen that the morphology retained same as before test, this indicates that the catalyst maintains high structural stability during the reaction.



Figure S2. SEM image of Cu-Mn – B

#### S1.d. X-ray photoelectron spectra (XPS) for Cu-Mn catalyst B

The oxidation states of both metals in Cu-Mn catalyst B was determined by XPS analysis. Figure S3a shows the high resolution narrow scans of Mn 2p for Cu-Mn catalyst B. The observed spinorbit splitting between the two main peak positions of Mn – Mn  $2p_{3/2}$  and  $Mn2p_{1/2}$  could be deconvoluted into three peaks each and the distance between them was ~ 12 eV.<sup>8</sup> The observed binding energy peaks are broad and asymmetric, which suggests the coexistence of Mn in multivalent states as  $Mn^{2+}$ ,  $Mn^{3+}$  and  $Mn^{4+}$  ions. The asymmetric index  $\beta$  value was found to be 1.36, which is the evidence for the multiplet splitting of the Mn 2p level.<sup>9</sup> Figure S3b shows the high resolution narrow scans of Cu 2p for Cu-Mn catalyst B. The observed binding energy peaks at ~ 934 eV and ~ 955 eV are due to Cu  $2p_{3/2}$  and Cu  $2p_{1/2}$ , respectively and can be attributed to Cu in +2 oxidation state. Thus, the XPS analysis indicated that the Cu exists in Cu<sup>2+</sup> oxidation state and Mn in the multi-states (Mn<sup>2+</sup>, Mn<sup>3+</sup> and Mn<sup>4+</sup>). Thus, the improved efficiency of Cu and Mn metals when combined in the form of bimetallic catalyst, over individual metals could be attributed to the existence of these metals in multiple oxidation states (Cu<sup>+2</sup>, Mn<sup>+2</sup>, Mn<sup>+3</sup> and Mn<sup>+4</sup>) in bimetallic Cu-Mn catalyst.



Figure S3. High resolution narrow X-ray photoelectron spectra (XPS) for Cu-Mn catalyst B

#### **S2.** SPECTRAL DATA SCANS OF IMIDAZO[1,2-A]PYRIDINES

## S2.a. <sup>1</sup>H, <sup>13</sup>C and DEPT-135 NMR spectrum of 3-benzyl-2-phenyl-imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine (5a)





S2.b. <sup>1</sup>H, <sup>13</sup>C and DEPT-135 NMR spectrum of 3-benzyl-2-(2-chlorophenyl)-imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine (5b)





S2.c. <sup>1</sup>H, <sup>13</sup>C and DEPT-135 NMR spectrum of 3-benzyl-2-(furan-2-yl)-imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine (5c)



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## S2.d. <sup>1</sup>H NMR NMR spectrum of 3-benzyl-2-(4-methoxyphenyl)-imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine (5d)









## S2.f. <sup>1</sup>H, <sup>13</sup>C, DEPT-135 and <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectrum of 3-(4-methoxybenzyl)-2-(3,5-difluorophenyl)-imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine (5g)

















## S2.i. <sup>1</sup>H, <sup>13</sup>C and DEPT-135 NMR spectrum of 3-(2-chlorobenzyl)-2-(4-chlorophenyl)Himidazo[1,2-a]pyridine (5j)





### S2.j. <sup>1</sup>H, <sup>13</sup>C and DEPT-135 NMR spectrum of 3-benzyl-6-chloro-2-(4-chlorophenyl)imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine (5k)





### S2.k. <sup>1</sup>H, <sup>13</sup>C, DEPT-135 and <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectrum of 3-benzyl-2-(4-chlorophenyl)-6-fluoroimidazo[1,2-a]pyridine (5l)





## S2.1. <sup>1</sup>H, <sup>13</sup>C and DEPT-135 NMR spectrum of 3-benzyl-6-chloro-2-phenyl-imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine (5m)











### S2.n. <sup>1</sup>H, <sup>13</sup>C and DEPT-135 NMR spectrum of 3-benzyl-2-(4-bromophenyl)-6-chloroimidazo[1,2-a]pyridine (50)





### S2.o. <sup>1</sup>H, <sup>13</sup>C and DEPT-135 NMR spectrum of 3-benzyl-6-chloro-2-(furan-2-yl)imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine (5p)



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# S2.p. <sup>1</sup>H, <sup>13</sup>C, DEPT-135 and <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectrum of 3-Benzyl-6-chloro-2-(3,5-difluorophenyl)-imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine (5q)









# S2.q. <sup>1</sup>H, <sup>13</sup>C, DEPT-135 and <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectrum of 3-Benzyl-6-fluoro-2-(4-methoxyphenyl)-imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine (5r)







# S2.r. <sup>1</sup>H, <sup>13</sup>C, DEPT-135 and <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectrum of 3-benzyl-6-fluoro-2-(3,5-difluorophenyl)-imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine (5s):





### S2.s. <sup>1</sup>H, <sup>13</sup>C, DEPT-135 and <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectrum of 3-benzyl-6-fluoro-2-(furan-2-yl)imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine (5t):



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# S2.t. <sup>1</sup>H, <sup>13</sup>C, DEPT-135 and <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectrum of 3-benzyl-2-(3,5-difluorophenyl)-8-methyl-imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine (5u):



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### S2.u. <sup>1</sup>H, <sup>13</sup>C and DEPT-135 NMR spectrum of 3-benzyl-2-(furan-2-yl)-8-methylimidazo[1,2-a]pyridine (5v)



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### S2.v. <sup>1</sup>H, <sup>13</sup>C and DEPT-135 NMR spectrum of 3-benzyl-2-(2-chlorophenyl)-8-methylimidazo[1,2-a]pyridine (5w)





### S3. Anticancer activity of imidazo[1,2-a]pyridines 5a-g and 5k-5w

Entry	MIAPaCa-2	PC-3	HL-60	A549	
5a	12.11	29.71	21.11	17.88	
5b	23.32	22.53	19.01	12.88	
5c	9.11	7.05	8.99	10.98	
5d	12.98	18.94	23.9	25.55	
5e	27.99	37.32	21.1	34.12	
<b>5</b> f	14.44	13.79	24.99	24	
5g	0	0	15.98	10.98	
5k	11.99	9.95	23.89	13.33	
51	8.90	0	12.11	7.76	
5m	17.67	19.15	31.9	31.77	
5n	30.11	30.34	32.09	36.87	
50	11	0	12.56	12	
5p	13.23	18.41	21.41	17.88	
5q	21.99	18.53	28.87	23	
5r	21.66	34.08	21.77	28.99	
5s	31.11	8.55	31.23	16.98	
5t	21.22	38.03	21.00	23.44	
5u	22.67	4.38	24.76	27.99	
5v	15.52	1.25	15.67	11.21	
5w	26.43	0	12.90	0	

Table S3. Anticancer activity of imidazo[1,2-a]pyridines 5a-g and 5k-5w (% growth inhibition) at 10  $\mu M$ 

#### S4. Mechanism of the reaction

The possible mechanism for Cu-Mn catalyzed domino three-component coupling and 5-*exo-dig* cyclization is depicted in Figure S4. The reaction mechanism comprises a cascade of reactions involving initial condensation of 2-aminopyridine and aldehyde to form imine **I**. The nucleophilic attack by alkyne to the imine C=N bond of **I** produces propargyl amine **II**. Finally, the intramolecular nucleophilic attack of nitrogen in pyridine ring to the triple bond in a '5-*exo-dig*' fashion produces cyclized intermediate **III** which after protonation followed by isomerization leads to formation of imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine **5a**.



Figure S4. Proposed mechanism for Cu-Mn catalyzed MCR protocol for synthesis of imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine 5a