Dear editor,

Thank you for the time and effort that the reviewers (and possibly the editor) have put into assessing the previous version of the manuscript.

The comments given by the reviewer B are clarified as below

**Comment 1**: The author should check the toxicity of compounds.  
**Reply 1**: The toxicities of the compounds were tested against human breast cancer cell line MDA-MB-231 in our laboratory (unpublished result). The compounds were found to be moderately toxic as compared to positive control aderamycin.

**Comment 2:** Fig1-4 are not necessary these figures should be removed.

**Reply 2:** As the figures 1-4 are cited in the text hence the author feels that they are necessary for the article. Moreover the figures give insight into rationale behind the synthesized compounds.

The comments given by the reviewer H are clarified as below

**Comment 1**: Derivatives 13 – 17 and 18 – 22 contained asymmetric carbon, but no assignments of absolute configurations were done, and authors did not give any comments or discussion about that aspect. Are the products obtained as racemic mixture or as single enantiomers? Furthermore, are they tested as racemic mixture or pure enantiomers? This issue must be comment and put into perspective of obtained results.

**Reply 1:** Although the compounds **13-22** are racemates their structures are unambiguously assigned with the help of spectral studies. The 1H NMR spectra of compounds **13-22** displayed three sets of signals with an ABX pattern for the pyrazoline ring protons. The sterochemical nature of the hydrogens HA, HB & HX have been ascertained from the study of coupling constant (*J*). The vicinal coupling constant between HA & HX was found to be 2.7-10 Hz (*J*AX) which describes that these hydrogens are *cis* to each other while *trans* relationship between HB & HX was evident from the coupling constant of *J*BX = 10-15 Hz. The coupling value of *J*AB = 17.5-20 Hz between HA & HB evidently indicates their germinal placement at C-4.

The above paragraph has been inserted in the article (in page 6, indicated by red colour)

The compounds are tested as racemic mixture, this could be attributed to their weak antibacterial activity. (Sentence has been inserted in page 8, indicated by red colour).

**Comment 2:** References for synthesis of derivatives 1, 2, and 3-7 must be cited.

**Reply 2:** The reference for synthesis of compound 1 and 2 is now included in the reference section (no 24). Reference for synthesis of compound 3-7 was already cited in the orginal article (no 25).

In addition to the above citations the following sentence has been inserted in the article (page 4, indicated by red colour)

Condensation of *o*-phenylenediamine with lactic acid under Phillips condition has lead to 2-hydroxyethylbenzimidazole **1**, chromic oxidation of the latter followed by neutralization with ammonia led to 2-acetylbenzimidazole **2**24.

**Comment 3:** For bromo-containing derivatives (11, 16 and 21) corresponding M+2 ions (accompanied with relative intensity) must be cited, since corresponding signals could be seen in given copies of mass spectra.

**Reply 3:** For bromo-containing derivatives (11 and 16) m/z values of corresponding M+2 ions are now cited in their respective places (page 2 and 4 in supplementary matter). For compound 21 the signal for M+2 ion is not observed in the spectra.

In addition to above, other correction as suggested by the reviewer (embedded in SI and main text) are made (page 3, 4)