

# Direct Organocatalytic Chemoselective Synthesis of Pharmaceutically Active 1,2,3-Triazoles and 4,5'-Bitriazoles

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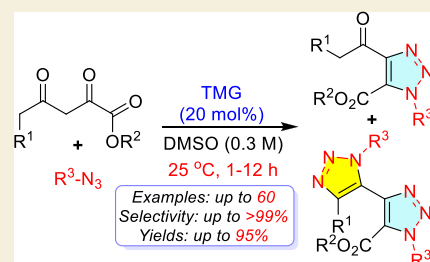
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**ABSTRACT:** Carbonyl-containing 1,4,5-trisubstituted- and 1,4-disubstituted-1,2,3-triazoles are well-known for their wide range of applications in pharmaceutical and medicinal chemistry, but their high-yielding metal-free synthesis has always remained challenging, as no comprehensive protocol has been outlined to date. Owing to their structural and medicinal importance, herein, we synthesized various carbonyl-containing 1,4,5-trisubstituted- and 1,4-disubstituted-1,2,3-triazoles and unsymmetrical 4,5'-bitriazoles with high yields and chemo-/regioselectivity from the library of 2,4-diketooesters and azides in a sequential one-pot manner through the combination of organocatalytic enolization, in situ [3 + 2]-cycloaddition, and hydrolysis reactions. The commercial availability of the starting materials/catalysts, diverse substrate scope, performance in a one-pot manner, chemo-/regioselectivity of organo-click reaction, quick synthesis of unsymmetrical 4,5'-bitriazoles, a large number of synthetic applications, and numerous medicinal applications of carbonyl-containing 1,2,3-triazoles are the key attractions of this metal-free organo-click work.

**KEYWORDS:** azides, carbonyls, [3 + 2]-cycloaddition, organo-click, 1,2,3-triazoles, 4,5'-bitriazoles



## INTRODUCTION

In recent years, chemists employed various strategies for the synthesis of functionalized 1,2,3-triazoles, as functionalized 1,2,3-triazoles found a wide range of applications in biological studies, therapeutic drug discovery, material chemistry, and agrochemical industry.<sup>1–8</sup> The thermally induced nonselective Huisgen azide–alkyne [3 + 2]-cycloaddition was transformed into the highly regioselective 1,4-disubstituted-1,2,3-triazoles with high yields through the copper(I)-catalyzed azide–alkyne [3 + 2]-cycloaddition as click reaction by Sharpless and Meldal independently.<sup>9–16</sup> Apart from Cu-catalysis, azide–alkyne [3 + 2]-cycloadditions were also developed with ruthenium,<sup>17–19</sup> iridium,<sup>20–22</sup> nickel,<sup>23–26</sup> magnesium,<sup>27</sup> and also using strain-promoted<sup>28–32</sup> manner for the construction of functionalized 1,2,3-triazoles. Besides the transition metal-mediated azide–alkyne [3 + 2]-cycloaddition reaction for 1,2,3-triazoles synthesis, Ramachary, Bressy, Wang, Dehaen, Paixao, and other groups developed alternative green synthetic methods of azide-carbonyl [3 + 2]-cycloadditions employing a variety of amines as organocatalysts.<sup>33–78</sup>

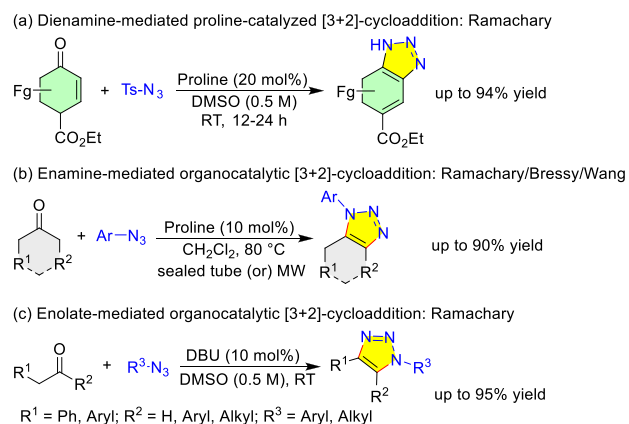
In 2008, Ramachary and co-workers reported a proline-catalyzed [3 + 2]-cycloaddition reaction between Hagemann's ester derivatives and tosyl azide, which was the initial footstep toward the organocatalytic azide-carbonyl [3 + 2]-cycloaddition or organo-click reaction using a push–pull dienamine strategy.<sup>33</sup> Later in 2011, Wang and Bressy et al. reported

independently an enamine-mediated [3 + 2]-cycloaddition for the synthesis of 1,2,3-triazoles using a variety of activated and unactivated cyclic and linear ketones with aryl azides (Scheme 1).<sup>34–36</sup> In 2014, enolate-mediated organocatalytic [3 + 2]-cycloaddition of a variety of activated carbonyls and aryl azides for the synthesis of 1,4,5-trisubstituted- and 1,4-disubstituted-1,2,3-triazoles was developed by Ramachary et al. (Scheme 1).<sup>49–61</sup> Previous studies showed that the alkyl trisubstituted 1,2,3-triazole systems have the least scope for further functional group modification because of the requirement of expensive reagents and harsh reaction conditions.<sup>79–82</sup> It is well-known that modification of the different substitutions on the 1,2,3-triazole system, by incorporation or removal of different functional groups, may work better, for a wider application in material, medicinal, and drug discoveries. It can be possible either by choosing functionalized starting materials or by further functionalization of the trisubstituted 1,2,3-triazoles by various reactions. Ester and carbonyl group-substituted 1,2,3-triazoles are the most fascinating scaffolds, as

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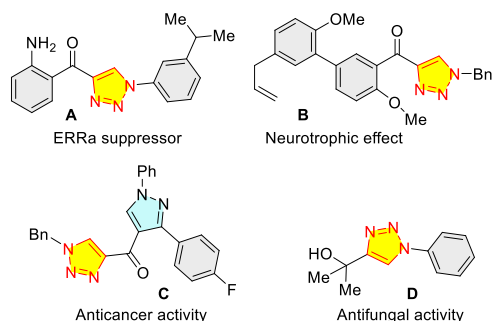


### Scheme 1. Previous Organocatalytic Azide-Carbonyl [3 + 2]-Cycloaddition Reactions<sup>a</sup>



<sup>a</sup>(a), (b), and (c) reproduced with permission from refs 33, 34, 49, and 50, respectively. Copyright 2008, 2011, 2014, and 2014 John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

the ester and the carbonyl groups can be converted very easily to other functional groups to produce biologically important molecules (Figure 1).<sup>83–89</sup> Despite a huge demand, there are



**Figure 1.** Biologically active carbonyl-containing 1,2,3-triazoles.

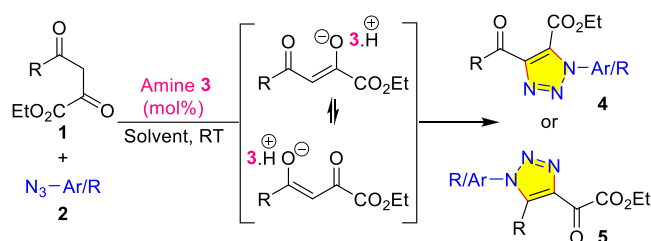
very less reports for the direct synthesis of acyl (ester and carbonyl)-substituted 1,2,3-triazoles through organocatalytic [3 + 2]-cycloaddition.<sup>33–78</sup> This may be due to an uncontrolled reactivity of the active methylene compound containing three carbonyl groups, which act as a potential synthon for 1,2,3-triazoles. To overcome the challenges and to understand the reactivity and regioselectivity of the unsymmetrical CH-acids containing three carbonyls toward [3 + 2]-cycloaddition with azides, we have designed/developed a suitable methodology to produce ester/ketone group-containing 1,4,5-trisubstituted-1,2,3-triazoles through 1,1,3,3-tetramethylguanidine (TMG)-catalyzed [3 + 2]-cycloaddition between the aryl/alkyl/vinyl azides and the 2,4-diketooesters at room temperature (Scheme 2).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Reaction Optimization

We started our optimization with the reaction between ethyl-2,4-dioxopentanoate **1a** (0.3 mmol) and 1.5 equiv of the phenyl azide **2a** in the presence of 20 mol % 1,8-diazabicyclo[5.4.0]undec-7-ene (DBU) **3a** as a catalyst/base in DMSO solvent at room temperature. Within 3 h, the reaction gave organo-click product 1,2,3-triazole **4aa** as a major product with 80% yield, and another click-product 1,2,3-

### Scheme 2. Reaction Design for the Chemoselective Organocatalytic Azide-Carbonyl [3 + 2]-Cycloaddition (OrgACC) Reaction



triazole **5aa** was not observed (Table 1, entry 1). When the same organo-click reaction was carried out using a series of

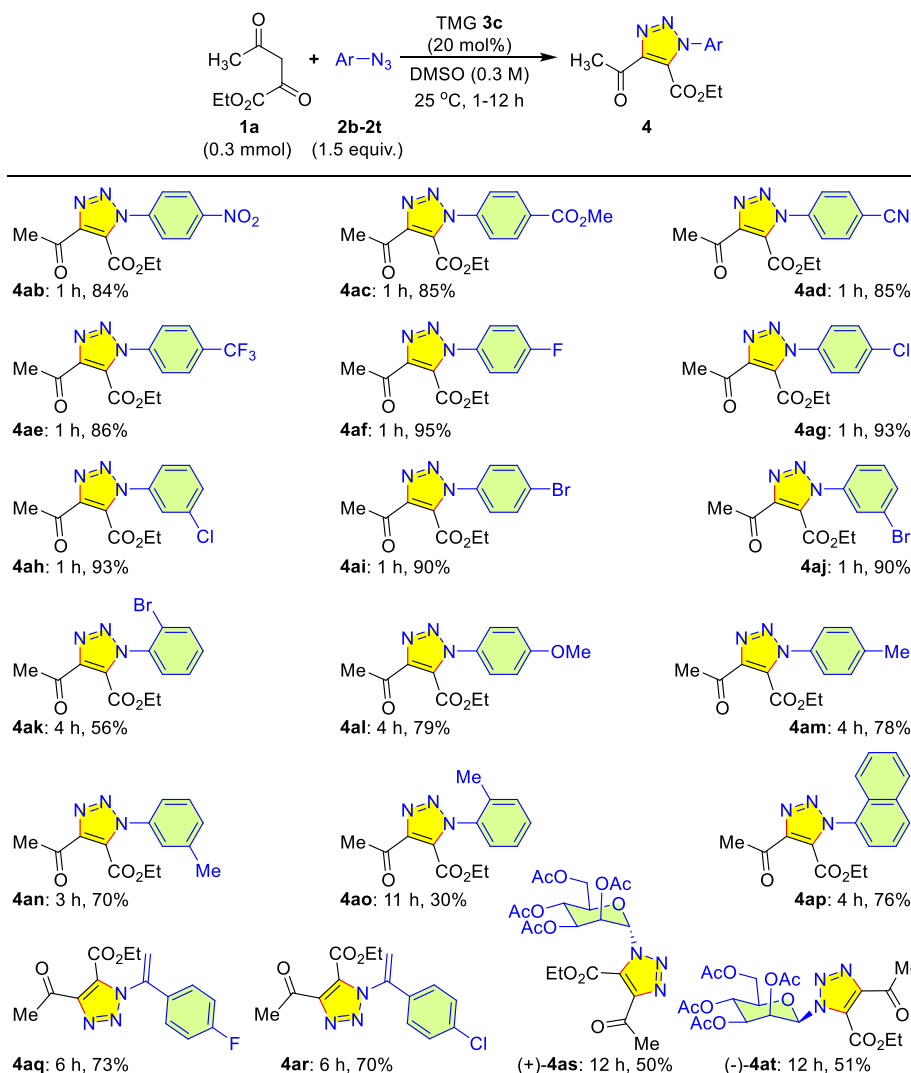
**Table 1.** Reaction Optimization for Chemoselective OrgAKC Reaction<sup>a</sup>

entry	catalyst <b>3</b> (20 mol %)	solvent (0.3 M)	T (h)	yield (%) <sup>b</sup>	ratio <sup>c</sup> (4/5)
1	<b>3a</b>	DMSO	3	80	>20:1
2	<b>3b</b>	DMSO	5	63	>20:1
3	<b>3c</b>	DMSO	1	84	>20:1
4	<b>3d</b>	DMSO	6	64	>20:1
5	<b>3e</b>	DMSO	36	05	>20:1
6	<b>3f</b>	DMSO	144	30	>20:1
7	<b>3g</b>	DMSO	1.7	79	>20:1
8	<b>3h</b>	DMSO	2	70	>20:1
9	<b>3i</b>	DMSO	2	75	>20:1
10 <sup>d</sup>	<b>3a</b>	DMF	37	50	>20:1
11 <sup>d</sup>	<b>3a</b>	CHCl <sub>3</sub>	22	15	>20:1
42 <sup>d</sup>	<b>3a</b>	CH <sub>3</sub> CN	37	15	>20:1
13 <sup>e</sup>	<b>3c</b>	DMSO	1	71	>20:1
14 <sup>f</sup>	<b>3c</b>	DMSO	2	64	>20:1

<sup>a</sup>Reaction was carried out in solvent (0.3 M) with **1a** (0.3 mmol), **2a** (1.5 equiv), and catalyst **3** (20 mol %). <sup>b</sup>Yield refers to the column-purified product. <sup>c</sup>Ratio of isomers **4aa/5aa** was determined by <sup>1</sup>H NMR analysis of the crude reaction mixture. <sup>d</sup>Starting material **1a** was recovered in 50–70% yield. <sup>e</sup>Catalyst **3c** is used in 25 mol %. <sup>f</sup>Catalyst **3c** is used in 10 mol %.

different amine and base catalysts, like 20 mol % of 1,5,7-triazabicyclo[4.4.0]dec-5-ene (TBD) **3b**, 1,1,3,3-tetramethylguanidine (TMG) **3c**, 1,4-diazabicyclo[2.2.2]octane (DABCO) **3d**, proline **3e**, pyrrolidine **3f**, K<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> **3g**, Cs<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> **3h**, and KO<sup>t</sup>Bu **3i**, delightfully, we observed the slightly best yield with catalyst TMG **3c** affording 84% of only one 1,2,3-triazole **4aa** within 1 h (Table 1, entries 2–9). In the case of secondary amines, like proline **3e** and pyrrolidine **3f**, the yields of the organo-click product **4aa** were unexpectedly low (5 and 30%, respectively) with an unusually prolonged reaction time of 36 and 144 h, respectively (Table 1, entries 5 and 6).

This observation indicates that the in situ enolate chemistry was working faster than the enamine chemistry in our present

Table 2. Reaction Scope with Different Azides for Chemoselective OrgAKC Reaction<sup>a,b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Reactions were carried out in DMSO (0.3 M) with 1.5 equiv of **2** relative to **1a** (0.3 mmol) in the presence of 20 mol % TMG **3c** at 25 °C. <sup>b</sup>Yield refers to the column-purified product.

protocol. After understanding the best catalyst relatively, we further moved on to screening different solvents like DMF, acetonitrile, and chloroform, but none of them performed better than DMSO (Table 1, entries 10–12) and in all the cases, the remaining starting material **1a** was recovered in a quantitative amount. Two more experiments were conducted to check the sensitivity and effectiveness of TMG **3c** via changing the catalytic loading from 20 mol % to 25 and 10 mol %, but no further improvement of yield was found (Table 1, entries 13 and 14). From the thorough investigation, we have concluded that ethyl-2,4-dioxopentanoate **1a** (0.3 mmol) and 1.5 equiv of the phenyl azide **2a** in the presence of 20 mol % TMG **3c** as a catalyst/base in DMSO at room temperature is the most favorable condition for the present chemoselective organo-click protocol (Table 1, entry 3).

#### Reaction Scope with Different Azides

With the optimized conditions in hand, the scope of the aryl azides was investigated (Table 2). First, we decided to use aryl azides and vinyl azides, followed by sugar azides **2b–2t** in the **3c**-catalyzed organo-click reaction with **1a**. All of the electron-deficient aryl azides **2b–2e** reacted well with **1a**, within a short

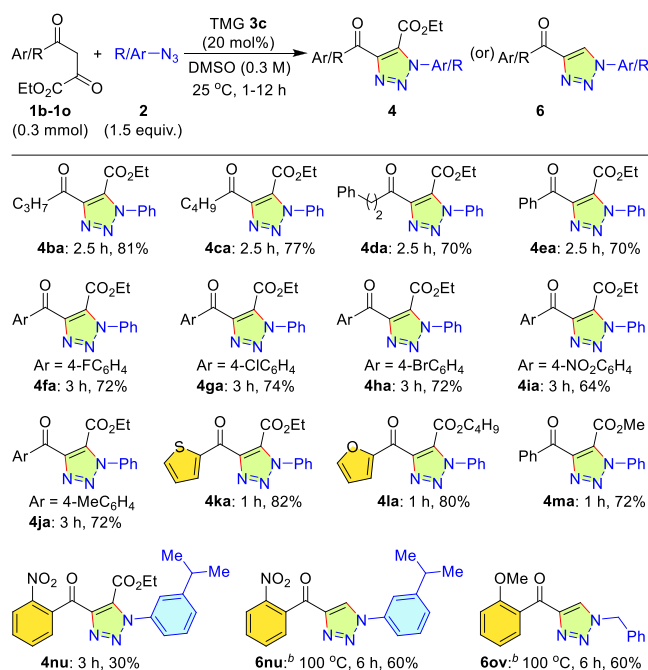
time of 1 h, forming the organo-click products **4ab–4ae**, with a very good yield of 84–86% (Table 2). The aryl azides **2f–2j**, substituted with halogens such as fluorine, chlorine, and bromine substituted at *para*-/*meta*-position on their phenyl ring, proceeded smoothly in this organo-click reaction to furnish 1,2,3-triazoles **4af–4aj** with an excellent yield of 90–95%, within 1 h (Table 2). With the bromine substitution at the *ortho*-position of the phenyl ring on the azide **2k**, the reaction furnished **4ak**, with a low yield of 56%, under a longer reaction time of 4 h, indicating a clear effect of increased steric factor (Table 2). The electron-rich *para*-methoxy substituted azide **2l**, afforded **4al**, with a yield of 79%, in 4 h (Table 2). When the substituent position varied from *para*-, *meta*- to *ortho*-methyl substituted aryl azides **2m–2o**, a clear effect of a steric factor was observed with a gradual decrement of the yields from 78% and 70 to 30% within 3, 4, and 11 h, respectively (Table 2). When, we explored the electron neutral 2-naphthyl azide **2p**, halogenated  $\alpha$ -azidostyrenes **2q** and **2r**, the reaction performed well, producing 1,2,3-triazoles **4ap**, **4aq**, and **4ar** in 76, 73, and 70% yield, respectively (Table 2). The  $\alpha$ -sugar azide **2s** and  $\beta$ -sugar azide **2t** also produced an

impressive yield of sugar substituted 1,2,3-triazoles (+)-**4as** and (–)-**4at** in 51 and 50% yield, respectively, within 12 h (Table 2). These results highlight the importance of TMG **3c**-catalyzed regio-/chemoselective azide-carbonyl [3 + 2]-cycloaddition for the synthesis of carbonyl-containing 1,2,3-triazoles **4ab–4at** in a short period of time with high yields under the ambient conditions (Table 2).

### Reaction Scope with Different 2,4-Diketesters

After having a thorough investigation of organo-click reaction with different azides **2**, we further examined the scope of organo-click reaction with different substituted 2,4-diketesters **1b–1o** (Table 3). When the alkyl-substituted 2,4-diketesters

**Table 3. Reaction Scope with Different 2,4-Diketesters for Chemoselective OrgAKC Reaction<sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup>Reactions were carried out in DMSO (0.3 M) with 1.5 equiv of **2** relative to **1** (0.3 mmol) in the presence of 20 mol % TMG **3c**. Yield refers to the column-purified product. <sup>b</sup>Reaction was performed under the 20 mol % of  $\text{K}_2\text{CO}_3$  at 100 °C in DMSO (0.3 M) for **6nu** formation and in dry DMF or EtOH (0.3 M) for **6ov** formation, respectively.

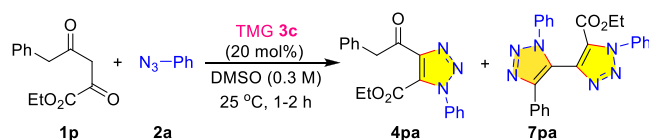
**1b–1d** reacted with the phenyl azide **2a** in the presence of 20 mol % of TMG **3c** at 25 °C in the DMSO solvent, the reaction selectively furnished 1,2,3-triazoles **4ba**, **4ca** and **4da** in 81, 77 and 70% yields, within 2.5 h, respectively, without observation of other minor organo-click products of 1,2,3-triazoles **5** (Table 3).

We further extended our investigation to test different electronic factors, by using unsubstituted phenyl and halogen-substituted phenyl rings containing 2,4-diketesters **1e–1h**, electron-withdrawing group such as *p*-NO<sub>2</sub> substituted 2,4-diketester **1i** and electron donating group such as *p*-Me substituted 2,4-diketester **1j**, which are reacted with phenyl azide **2a** in the presence of 20 mol % of TMG **3c** in DMSO solvent to selectively furnish 1,2,3-triazoles **4ea–4ja** in 64–81% yields within 3 h (Table 3). Under the same reaction condition, the heterocyclic aromatic ring containing 2,4-diketesters **1k**, **1l**, and methyl 2,4-dioxo-4-phenylbutanoate

**1m** were utilized in our present protocol to furnish the **4ka**, **4la**, and **4ma** in good yields of 82, 80 and 72%, respectively, within 1 h (Table 3). Applications in mind (see Figure 1), when the *o*-nitro substituted phenyl ring containing 2,4-diketester **1n** was treated with the 1.5 equiv of electron-rich *meta*-<sup>3</sup>Pr substituted aryl azide **2u**, the [3 + 2]-cycloaddition reaction afforded the 1,4,5-trisubstituted 1,2,3-triazole **4nu** with only 30% yield in DMSO solvent within 3 h (Table 3). Fascinatingly, the [3 + 2]-cycloaddition reactions using  $\text{K}_2\text{CO}_3$  as the catalyst, for **1n** with 1.5 equiv of **2u** in DMSO solvent and **1o** with 1.5 equiv of **BnN<sub>3</sub>**, **2v** in DMF or EtOH solvent (as the reaction was not moving in DMSO) at 25 °C for 2 h followed by 100 °C for 4 h produced tandem [3 + 2]-cycloaddition/decarboxylation products **6nu** and **6ov** with 60% yield in both the cases in a one-pot manner (Table 3). Yields of **6nu** and **6ov** increased to 80% when we used 2.0 equiv of **2u/2v** under similar reaction conditions, as shown in Table 3. Organo-click products **6nu** and **6ov** are precursors or analogues for biologically active compounds **A** and **B** mentioned in Figure 1, highlighting the importance of catalytic one-pot tandem [3 + 2]-cycloaddition/decarboxylation reactions.

There are a few previous reports, which discuss the synthesis of 4,4'-bitriazoles or 5,5'-bitriazoles, through metal-mediated double azide-alkyne [3 + 2]-cycloaddition or azide-alkyne [3 + 2]-cycloaddition followed by oxidative dimerization of the resulting 1,2,3-triazoles using metal reagents.<sup>11–15</sup> After a preliminary understanding of this reaction, we intended to employ the present metal-free protocol for the synthesis of 4,5'-bitriazoles **7** in a one-pot manner by using suitably designed double methylene activated 2,4-diketester **1**. For the same, we investigated the reaction of ethyl-2,4-dioxo-5-phenylpentanoate **1p**, which has two active methylene centers with different equivalents of phenyl azide **2a** under the optimized reaction conditions (Table 4). First, we performed

**Table 4. Reaction Optimization for 4,5'-Bitriazole 7pa Synthesis<sup>a</sup>**

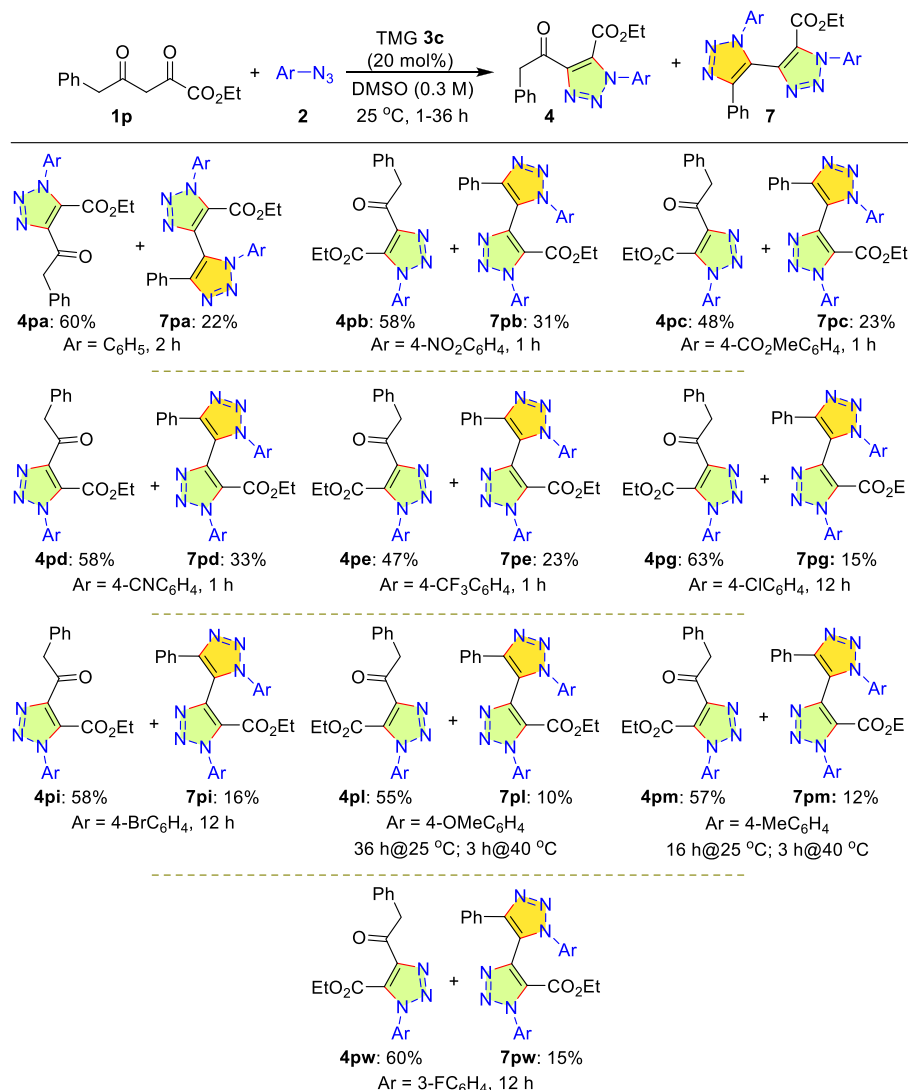


entry	PhN <sub>3</sub> <b>2a</b> (equiv)	<i>t</i> (h)	yield <b>4pa</b> (%) <sup>b</sup>	yield <b>7pa</b> (%) <sup>b</sup>	ratio <sup>c</sup> ( <b>4pa/7pa</b> )
1	1.0	1	73	10	7.3:1
2	1.5	2	60	20	3:1
3	2.0	2	60	22	2.7:1
4	2.5	2	60	17	3.5:1
5	2.0	12	50	20	2.5:1
6 <sup>d</sup>	4.0	12	60	33	1.8:1

<sup>a</sup>Reactions were carried out in solvent (0.3 M) with **2a** relative to **1p** (0.15 or 0.2 or 0.3 mmol) in the presence of TMG **3c** (20 mol %).

<sup>b</sup>Yields refers to the column-purified products. <sup>c</sup>Ratio is based on the isolated products. <sup>d</sup>Reaction performed with 30 mol % of **3c** at 70 °C.

the reaction of **1p** (0.15 mmol) with 1.0 equiv of **2a** under the 20 mol % of TMG **3c** in DMSO at 25 °C for 1 h furnished the monoclick product **4pa** in 73% yield and double-click 4,5'-bitriazole **7pa** in 10% yield (Table 4, entry 1). Treatment of **1p** (0.3 mmol) with 1.5 equiv of **2a** under the 20 mol % of TMG **3c** in DMSO at 25 °C for 2 h furnished the monoclick product

Table 5. Reaction Scope with 2,4-Diketone **1p** and **2** for Chemoselective OrgAKC<sup>a,b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Reactions were carried out in solvent (0.3 M) with 1.5 equiv of **2** relative to **1p** (0.3 mmol) in the presence of TMG **3c** (20 mol %). <sup>b</sup>Yields refers to the column-purified products.

**4pa** in 60% yield and double-click 4,5'-bitriazole **7pa** in 20% yield (Table 4, entry 2). Surprisingly, further reaction of **1p** (0.3 or 0.2 mmol) with 2.0 or 2.5 equiv of **2a** under the 20 mol % of TMG **3c** in DMSO at 25 °C for 2 h furnished the monoclick product **4pa** in 60% yield and double-click 4,5'-bitriazole **7pa** in only 22 or 17% yield, respectively (Table 4, entries 3 and 4). Even though after increasing the reaction time or equiv of azide **2a** or catalyst **3c** loading or temperature, the yield of double-click product **7pa** did not improve much and same time reaction become sluggish along with many unidentified byproducts in trace amounts (Table 4, entries 5 and 6). To further understand the kinetics of double-click reaction, we performed treatment of pure monoclick product **4pa** with 2.0 equiv of **2a** under the 20 mol % of TMG **3c** in DMSO at 25 °C for 6 h, furnished the double-click product **7pa** in only 40% yield, which is explaining the sensitive nature of this second click reaction and substrate **4pa** (result not shown in Table 4).

We further investigated the TMG **3c**-catalyzed organo-click reaction scope by choosing 1.0 or 1.5 equiv of different azides **2** with diketone **1p** (Table 5). The [3 + 2]-cycloaddition

reaction between **1p** (0.3 mmol) and the electron-deficient aryl azides **2b–2e** (1.5 equiv) in the presence of 20 mol % of TMG **3c** in DMSO, produced both monotriazoles **4** and 4,5'-bitriazoles **7** of **4pb** (58%) and **7pb** (31%), **4pc** (48%) and **7pc** (23%), **4pd** (58%) and **7pd** (33%), and **4pe** (47%) and **7pe** (23%), respectively, within 1.0 h at 25 °C (Table 5). To further understand the reactivity of the diketone **1p** toward different azides, we performed the [3 + 2]-cycloaddition reactions between **1p** (0.3 mmol) and the halogenated aryl azides **2g**, **2i**, and **2w** (1.5 equiv) to furnish the monotriazoles of **4pg**, **4pi**, and **4pw** in 63, 58, and 60% yields, respectively, along with 4,5'-bitriazoles **7pg**, **7pi**, and **7pw** as minor products in 15, 16, and 15% yields, respectively, for longer reaction times of 12 h at 25 °C (Table 5). In a further understanding, TMG **3c**-catalyzed reaction of diketone **1p** with electron-rich azides **2l** and **2m** (1.5 equiv) at 25 °C for 16–36 h and at 40 °C for 3 h furnished the monotriazole products **4pl** and **4pm** in 55 and 57% yields, respectively, and 4,5'-bitriazoles **7pl** and **7pm** were formed as minor products in 10 and 12% yields, respectively, as shown in Table 5. Monotriazoles **4** and 4,5'-bitriazoles **7** were well separated by silica-gel mediated column chromatography.

Surprisingly, when we performed TMG **3c**-catalyzed click reaction of **1p** (0.3 mmol) with 1.0 equiv of different less reactive azides **2g**, **2i**, **2w**, **2l** and **2m** at 25 °C for 1–2 h furnished the monotriazoles **4pg**, **4pi**, **4pw**, **4pl** and **4pm** in moderate (49, 50, 44, 44 and 51%) yields, respectively, along with 4,5'-bitriazoles **7pg**–**7pm** in only 5–9% yield (results not shown in Table 5). In support of the above results, we observed that after 1.0 h of TMG **3c**-catalyzed reaction between **1p** and **2a**, starting material **1p** was consumed totally, but azide **2a** was still there in the reaction medium, with multiple unidentified spots, along with the spots of compound **2a** and the organo-click products **4pa** and **7pa** in the TLC analysis, which clearly indicates the decomposition of **1p** during the course of organo-click reaction. The sensitive and highly reactive nature of 2,4-diketoeater **1p** under the organo-click reaction conditions causes the less yield of **4pa** and **7pa**, and the same pattern is observed in the case of other azides **2g**, **2i**, **2w**, **2l**, and **2m** too (Table 5).

Functionalized 4,5'-bitriazoles **7** are structurally interesting compounds, which can have an axis of chirality due to the controlled rotation of the C–C bond between two triazole rings.<sup>61</sup> To test this phenomenon, we have tried a few compounds **7** to separate their possible atropisomers through the chiral HPLC analysis, but we have seen only one peak in many chiral columns. 4,5'-Bitriazoles **7** can have an axis of chirality, but the barrier for racemization is too low to isolate the chiral forms at 25 °C. This was further confirmed by performing the organo-click reaction of chiral diketone (–)-**1q** with aryl azide **2d** in DMSO under the TMG **3c**-catalysis at 25 °C for 8 h furnished the chiral 4,5'-bitriazole (–)-**7qd** in 60% yield with almost single diastereomer. The same organo-click reaction of (–)-**1q** with two different azides **2a/2g** also furnished the 4,5'-bitriazoles (–)-**7qa** in 43% yield and (–)-**7qg** in 52% yield with single diastereomer, respectively (Figure 2). These results confirm that the barrier for racemization is too low to isolate the diastereomers at 25 °C (Figure 2).<sup>61</sup>

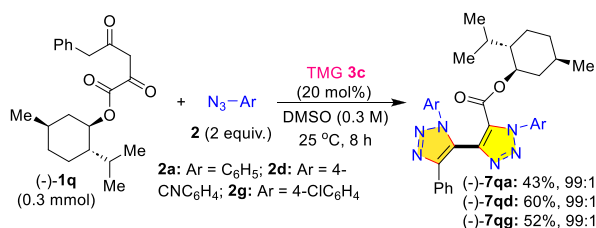
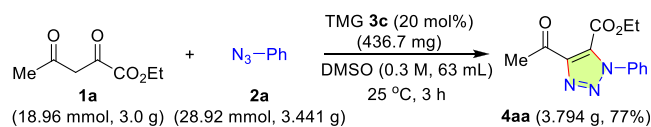


Figure 2. Selective one-pot synthesis of chiral 4,5'-bitriazoles **7**.

### Synthetic Applications

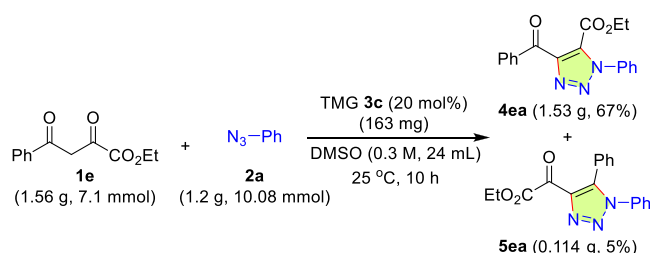
Applications in mind and at the same time to investigate the sustainability of the organocatalytic [3 + 2]-cycloaddition reaction through bulk scale, we planned a gram-scale reaction of ethyl 2,4-dioxopentanoate **1a** (3.0 g, 18.96 mmol) with phenyl azide **2a** (3.441 g, 28.92 mmol, 1.5 equiv) in DMSO (63 mL, 0.3 M) under the catalysis of TMG **3c** (20 mol %, 436.7 mg) at 25 °C for 3 h, which produced slightly reduced yield of **4aa** (3.794 g, 77%) compared to milligram scale in a highly chemoselective manner (Scheme 3). This gram-scale reaction under ambient conditions demonstrated the ease of use and importance of the enolate-mediated [3 + 2]-cycloaddition reaction for industrial applications (Scheme 3).

### Scheme 3. Gram-Scale Synthesis of the OrgAKC Product **4aa**



We performed another gram-scale reaction for the investigation of reactivity, sustainability, and selectivity between the ethyl-2,4-dioxo-4-phenylbutanoate **1e** (1.56 g, 7.1 mmol) and phenyl azide **2a** (1.2 g, 10.08 mmol) in DMSO (24 mL, 0.3 M) under the catalysis of TMG **3c** (20 mol %, 163 mg) at 25 °C for 10 h, which furnished 67% of the major organo-click product **4ea** (1.53 g) and 5% of the minor organo-click product **5ea** (0.114 g), as shown in Scheme 4.

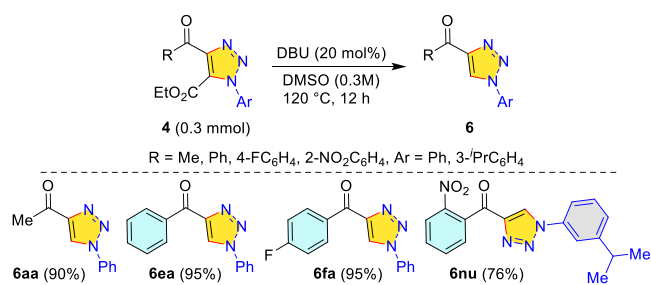
### Scheme 4. Gram-Scale Synthesis of the OrgAKC Product **4ea**



Surprisingly, we are able to observe formation of minor organo-click product **5ea** in gram-scale reaction only compared to milligram scale may be due to the less formation and same time decomposition nature (Scheme 4).

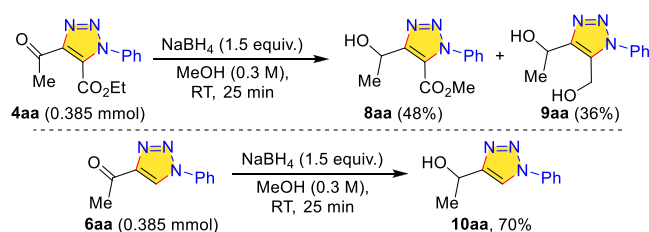
The excellence of the metal-free [3 + 2]-cycloaddition reactions was further demonstrated in the synthesis of a similar core structure of highly medicinally rich acylated 1,4-disubstituted-1,2,3-triazoles **6**.<sup>1–8,83–89</sup> We performed the decarboxylation reactions on the 1,4,5-trisubstituted-1,2,3-triazoles **4** using 20 mol % of DBU **3a** in DMSO at 120 °C to afford the 1,4-disubstituted-1,2,3-triazoles **6aa**, **6ea**, **6fa**, and **6nu** in good to excellent yields (90, 95, 95, and 76%, respectively) within 12 h (Scheme 5).

### Scheme 5. Synthesis of Carbonyl-Containing 1,4-Disubstituted-1,2,3-triazoles **6**



When the acylated 1,2,3-triazole **4aa** was treated with sodium borohydride in methanol solvent at room temperature, the corresponding secondary alcohol containing 1,2,3-triazole **8aa** was obtained in 48% yield along with the diol containing 1,2,3-triazole **9aa** in 36% yield, within 25 min (Scheme 6). Formation of diol-1,2,3-triazole **9aa** in the above reaction through ester reduction is surprising and may be due to the

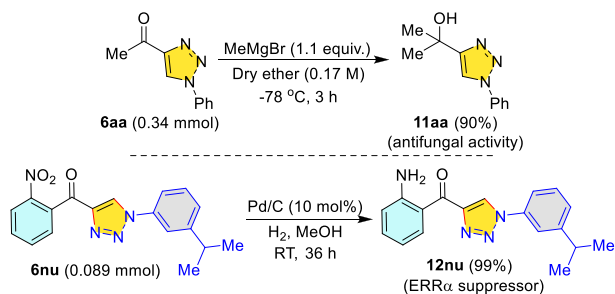
## Scheme 6. Reduction of Ketone and Ester Groups of 1,2,3-Triazoles 4aa/6aa



neighboring secondary alcohol group induction or activation of the ester group. Similarly, 4-acetyl-1,2,3-triazole 6aa was reduced to a secondary alcohol containing 1,2,3-triazole 10aa in 70% yield, within 25 min (Scheme 6).

With further medicinal applications in mind, the decarboxylated 4-acetyl-1,2,3-triazole 6aa (0.34 mmol) was treated with the methyl Grignard reagent of MeMgBr (1.1 equiv) in dry ether at  $-78^{\circ}\text{C}$  for 3 h to furnish the antifungal active scaffold of *tert*-hydroxyl-1,2,3-triazole 11aa (D) with an excellent yield (Scheme 7 and Figure 1).<sup>84</sup> In a further application, hydrogen-

## Scheme 7. Synthesis of Biologically Active 1,2,3-Triazoles 11aa (D) and 12nu (A)



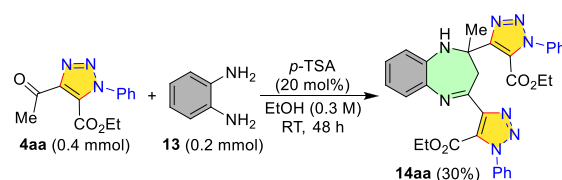
gas-mediated reduction of the nitro group of carbonyl-containing 1,2,3-triazole 6nu (0.089 mmol) under the 10 mol % of Pd/C-catalysis in methanol (1.0 mL) at room temperature for 36 h furnished the ERR $\alpha$  suppressor 12nu (A) in excellent yield (Scheme 7 and Figure 1).<sup>85</sup> Presently reported organocatalytic click reactions followed by simple synthetic transformations produced high-overall yields of biologically active 1,2,3-triazoles 11aa (D) and 12nu (A) compared to previous synthetic methods.<sup>84,85</sup>

As more nitrogen-containing molecules are predominantly showing different biological activities, herein, we try to utilize the two carbonyl groups of compounds 4 to undergo condensation with diamine to furnish highly nitrogen-rich molecules.<sup>83–89</sup> For the same, compound 4aa was treated with *ortho*-phenylenediamine 13 (0.5 equiv) in the presence of 20 mol % of *p*-TSA in ethanol (0.3 M) at room temperature for 48 h to furnish a medically interesting seven-membered heterocyclic bis-triazole product 14aa in 30% yield (Scheme 8).

## Reaction Mechanism

A plausible mechanism is proposed for the present organo-click protocol, which is going to explain the formation of different 1,2,3-triazole products 4, 5, and 7. When 2,4-diketoester 1a was treated with 20 mol % of TMG 3c, two kinds of enolates 1a and 1b can be formed in situ in the course of the deprotonation reaction, which are tautomers in

## Scheme 8. Synthesis of Benzodiazepine-Containing 1,2,3-Triazole 14aa



equilibrium (Scheme 9). Whether organo-click reaction is concerted or stepwise,<sup>49</sup> the first step will be nucleophilic polar addition of enolates 1a or 1b with aryl azides 2 to produce in situ 1,3-disubstituted 1,2,3-triazenes 11a, which further undergo the second step as chemoselective intramolecular cyclization with electrophilic carbonyl to produce 4,5-dihydro-1,2,3-triazoles through path-(a) or path-(b). TMG 3c-mediated hydrolysis of in situ formed 4,5-dihydro-1,2,3-triazoles produces final 1,2,3-triazole products 4 and 5 (Scheme 9). Formation of 1,2,3-triazoles 4 as major products can be explained based on the thermodynamically feasible path-(a) due to the high electrophilic nature of  $\alpha$ -ketone to the ester group compared to  $\gamma$ -ketone (Scheme 9).<sup>49</sup>

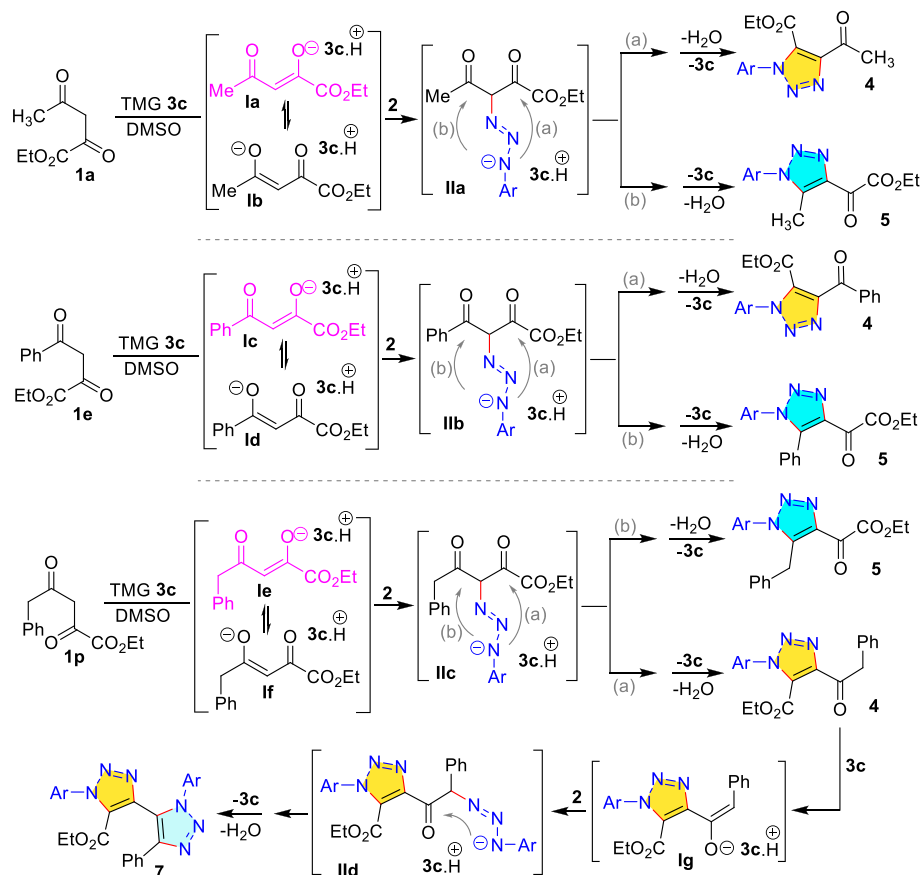
In the case of 2,4-diketoester 1e, two different tautomeric enolates, 1c and 1d, can be formed in situ when treated with the amine base 3c; even though both are in equilibrium, the enolate 1c or 1d participated in the sequential [3 + 2]-cycloaddition followed by hydrolysis reactions with aryl azides 2 to furnish the 1,2,3-triazole 4 as major products selectively through path-(a) of intermediate 11b. However, relatively electrophilic  $\gamma$ -benzoyl ketone also can participate in the intramolecular cyclization followed by hydrolysis reaction through intermediate 11b to furnish the 1,2,3-triazole 5 as minor products (Scheme 9).

On the other hand, 2,4-diketoester 1p has two active methylene centers and the reaction can produce three kinds of 1,2,3-triazoles 4, 5, and 7. The formation of major 1,2,3-triazole products 4 can be explained through the participation of in situ generated tautomeric enolates of 1e/1f from 1p and 3c with aryl azides 2 to produce 1,3-disubstituted 1,2,3-triazenes 11c, which further undergo chemoselective intramolecular cyclization with a highly electrophilic  $\alpha$ -ketone ester to produce 4,5-dihydro-1,2,3-triazoles through path-(a) followed by hydrolysis (Scheme 9). The formation of minor 4,5'-bitriazole products 7 can be explained through the 3c-catalyzed second [3 + 2]-cycloaddition followed by hydrolysis reactions of major carbonyl-containing 1,2,3-triazoles 4 with aryl azides 2 via the sequence of intermediates [1g → 11d → 7] formation as shown in Scheme 9.

## CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, we have developed a general and sustainable catalytic protocol for the high-yielding selective synthesis of carbonyl-containing 1,4,5-trisubstituted- and 1,4-disubstituted-1,2,3-triazoles and 4,5'-bitriazoles 4/5/6/7 from the readily available functionalized acyclic 2,4-diketoesters 1 and aryl/alkyl/vinyl azides 2 under 1,1,3,3-tetramethylguanidine (TMG)-catalysis under ambient conditions. In this manuscript, we have shown the simple and selective catalytic method for the synthesis of carbonyl-containing 1,2,3-triazoles as privileged building blocks for various applications. This work demonstrated the importance of mild organocatalytic in situ generation of acyclic enolate/dienolate reactivity compared to

## Scheme 9. Reaction Mechanism for the TMG-Catalyzed Enolate-Mediated Chemoselective [3 + 2]-Cycloaddition



enamines/dienamines for carbonyl-mediated [3 + 2]-cycloaddition reactions with less reactive azides under ambient conditions. Furthermore, we demonstrated the gram-scale synthesis, followed by synthetic transformations on the resulting carbonyl-containing 1,4,5-trisubstituted- and 1,4-disubstituted-1,2,3-triazoles 4/5/6 into the pharmaceutically important compounds of 11aa (D) and 12nu (A). Many of these 1,2,3-triazole applications highlight that the metal-free catalytic protocol and same time will give inspiration to develop synthetic to medicinal applications of these functionally rich carbonyl-containing 1,2,3-triazoles in the near future. Presently, we are expanding the library of various functionalized carbonyl-rich azidophiles 1 for [3 + 2]-cycloaddition with various azides 2 through sustainable enolate/dienolate/polyenolate chemistry for synthesizing medicinally important 1,2,3-triazoles.

## EXPERIMENTAL SECTION

### General Procedure for the Organo-Click Synthesis of 1,2,3-Triazoles 4, 5, 6, and 7

To an ordinary glass vial equipped with a magnetic stirring bar were added 2,4-diketoester 1 (0.3 mmol, 1.0 equiv), azides 2 (0.45 mmol, 1.5 equiv), and tetramethyl guanidine TMG 3c (6.9 mg, 0.06 mmol, 0.2 equiv, 20 mol %) in DMSO (1.0 mL, 0.3 M). The reaction mixture was allowed to stir until complete consumption of 1 (monitored by TLC) at room temperature. The corresponding organo-click products 4, 5, 6, and/or 7 were purified by column chromatography (silica gel: 100–200 mesh; eluent: EA/hexanes).

A few of the reactions were performed using 2,4-diketoester 1 (0.3 mmol, 1.0 equiv) and azides 2 (0.45 mmol, 1.5 equiv) under the catalysis of  $K_2CO_3$  3g (8.3 mg, 0.06 mmol, 0.2 equiv, 20 mol %) in

dry ethanol or DMF (1.0 mL, 0.3 M) at 80 °C. After complete consumption of 1, products 4/5/6/7 were purified by column chromatography (silica gel: 100–200 mesh; eluent: EA/hexanes).

### Decarboxylative Synthesis of Carbonyl-Containing 1,4-Disubstituted-1,2,3-Triazoles 6

To an ordinary sealed tube equipped with a magnetic stirring bar were added compound 4 (0.3 mmol, 1.0 equiv), DBU 3a (9.1 mg, 0.06 mmol, 0.2 equiv, 20 mol %), and DMSO (1.0 mL, 0.3 M). The reaction mixture was allowed to stir for 12 h at 120 °C. After complete consumption of compound 4 (monitored by TLC), workup was done by using saturated aqueous  $NH_4Cl$ , and the compound was extracted with DCM (3 × 10 mL). The combined organic layers were dried over anhydrous sodium sulfate, filtered, and concentrated. Pure product 6 was obtained by column chromatography (silica gel, mixture of hexanes and ethyl acetate).

For all other procedures referring to the synthesis of 2,4-diketoesters 1, azides 2, carbonyl-containing 1,4,5-trisubstituted-1,2,3-triazoles, 1,4-disubstituted-1,2,3-triazoles, 4,5'-bitriazoles, and their synthetic derivatives 4 to 14, see the Supporting Information.

## ASSOCIATED CONTENT

### Data Availability Statement

The data underlying this study are available in the published article and its Supporting Information.

### Supporting Information

The Supporting Information is available free of charge at <https://pubs.acs.org/doi/10.1021/acsorginorgau.4c00032>.

Characterization data (including  $^1H$  and  $^{13}C$  NMR spectra) for all products, experimental procedures, characterization data of new compounds, substrate syntheses, procedures, and analytical data for click



reactions, details of controlled experiments, and X-ray crystal structures (PDF)

### Accession Codes

CCDC 2321526–2321528 contain the supplementary crystallographic data for this paper. These data can be obtained free of charge via [www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk/data\\_request/cif](http://www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk/data_request/cif), or by emailing [data\\_request@ccdc.cam.ac.uk](mailto:data_request@ccdc.cam.ac.uk), or by contacting The Cambridge Crystallographic Data Centre, 12 Union Road, Cambridge CB2 1EZ, UK; fax: +44 1223 336033.

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### Author Contributions

The manuscript was written through contributions of all authors. All authors have given approval to the final version of the manuscript. CRediT: **Badaraita Gorachand** data curation, formal analysis, investigation, methodology, resources, writing-original draft; **Gundam Surendra Reddy** data curation, formal analysis, methodology; **Dhevalapally Buchi Ramachary** conceptualization, formal analysis, funding acquisition, investigation, methodology, project administration, resources, supervision, validation, visualization, writing-original draft, writing-review & editing.

### Notes

The authors declare no competing financial interest.

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