Corbyn calls for journalists to be 'set free' from 'billionaire' press barons as he proposes 'public interest media fund'

Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn floated a number of ideas, some "radical" by his own admission, about how to "set free" journalists from "billionaire" press barons and democratise news in the digital age.

In a speech that contained a few slip-ups –notably that local papers should root out "competition" instead of "corruption" – Corbyn spoke comprehensively for the first time about his position on the media and possible policies under a Labour government led by him.

Among the more radical ideas proposed by the Opposition Leader was that of giving journalists the right to elect editors.

He also touted the creation of a publicly-owned "British Digital Corporation", as a sister to the BBC, that could develop a "public social media platform with real privacy and public control over data".

Corbyn said the "best journalism takes on the powerful… and helps create an informed public" but noted that, while valued, there was a lack of proper funding to cover the costs of carrying it out.

He proposed granting charitable status for some local, investigative and public interest journalism and the creation of a "public interest media fund" that could be paid for by tech giants, such as Facebook and Google, either through Government negotiation or an enforced "windfall tax".

The Conservatives have said Corbyn's proposals represent "nothing more than a wholescale plan for more state control over our media".

A former reporter and chairman of the National Union of Journalists parliamentary group, Corbyn began his Alternative McTarggert Lecture at the Edinburgh TV Festival by telling the audience that the media is "actually close to my heart".

"I think about them every single moment of the day and sadly they think about me every single moment of the day," he said, making light of intensive press coverage since he was made Labour leader three years ago that has recently prompted him to complain to press regulator IPSO.

But for Britain's most prominent serving socialist politician, the problem is that "far too few people have a grip on most of the power". He said Britain had to accept some "home truths" about its media.

"For all the brilliant work done across its multiple outlets and platforms, the British media isn't ready for the challenges of the 21st century and so cannot properly serve the interests of a truly democratic society," he said.

Declaring the British press to be the "least trusted in Europe", Corbyn turned on British newspaper owners and editors, saying they have "dragged down standards so far that their hard working journalists are simply not trusted by the public – and that is a travesty".

-With Thanks from Press Gazette

High-profile Sikhs are among finalists in the 18thAsian Achievers Awards 2018.

From left Aman Virdi, Raj Manak, Kuldip Bhamrah and Raj Kohli.

Several influential British Sikhs are among the finalists at this year's Asian Achievers Awards, which pays tribute to the best of British Asian talent across the arts, community service, the professions, uniformed services, sports and the world of business.

They are among 32 finalists whose achievements will be celebrated at a ceremony at the Grosvenor House hotel, Park Lane, London on Friday, 14 September

The awards will raise vital funds for this year's chosen charity partner, Oracle Cancer. So far, the awards have raised £1.5m for several charities over the years.

The hosts of the evening are Eastenders actor Nitin Ganatra and KissFM's DJ Neev Spencer.

The Asian Achievers Awards are widely considered to be the premier event within the BAME community. As ABPL Chairman CB Patel explained: "I am delighted to unveil the shortlist for this year's nominees.

Amar Virdi

Asian cricketer Amar Virdi is a finalist in 18th Asian Achievers Awards 2018

Amar Virdi who plays for Surrey County Cricket Club has been selected as a finalist in the 18thAisan Achievers Awards 2018 (Sports Personality of the Year Award).

Raj Manak

Kent based construction entrepreneur Raj Manak is finalist in 18th Asian Achievers Awards 2018

Erith-based Raj Manak, owner of Stanmore Construction Ltd., has been selected as a finalist in the Asian Achiever Awards 2018.

Now featured in the Sunday Times Rich List, Raj puts his stellar success down to hard raft and a quality service.

And that maxim has certainly worked for Raj, having risen from being a labourer and plasterer with Stanmore Plastering Contractors in 1991 to the head of a business that made a £23m profit in 2017.

Raj transformed the traditional plastering and drylining contractor into a multi-skilled specialist with a range of services embracing interiors, architectural metal work, glazing, and building envelope engineering and construction.

Stanmore recently set up operations in Swindon to cover the M4 corridor and in Manchester and is eyeing a Midlands base. Raj's next goal is to become a £200-million business by 2023.

Kuldip Bhamrah

Decorated East Midlands ambulance technician Kuldip Bhamrah is finalist in 18th Asian Achievers Awards 2018

Leicester based East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) technician, Kuldip Singh Bhamrah, who wasawarded the prestigious Queen's Ambulance Service Medal for Distinguished Service in 2017.

Kuldip is a much loved and respected member of the EMAS team, known for his humour,

Raj Kohli

Chief Superintendent and Borough Commander of Hounslow Police, Raj Kohli is finalist in 18th Asian Achievers Awards 2018

The highest ranking Sikh officer in the Met Police, Chief Superintendent and Borough Commander of Hounslow, Raj Kohli, has been has been selected as a finalist in the 18th annual Asian Achiever Awards (Achievement in Uniformed and Civil Service category).

On his appointment in 2015, Raj Kohli pledged to make burglary, robbery and domestic abuse his top priorities in Hounslow. Since then, crime rates have continued to fall and Hounslow is on course to meet the Met's MOPAC 7 target of cutting seven key neighbourhood crimes, including robbery and burglary, by a fifth.