LETTER | Adam (not his real name) had recently subscribed to a telecommunications (telco) postpaid plan. He was motivated to subscribe to that particular plan because he was given the assurance that he will get a certain network speed coverage that he needs. However, to his dismay, the coverage was not up to his expectation and he feels dissatisfied paying extra while he only gets low-quality service. To make matters worse, he finds that switching and finding the right network provider is not as easy as it looks. Have you shared a similar fate as Adam? Recently, the Communications and Multimedia Ministry pledged to improve pricing and speed of broadband services for Malaysian consumers. While this is highly applauded by NCCC, the welfare of telco consumers must be given the same attention by the ministry. For the past few years, issues in relation to telecommunications have not been improved. This is reflected in National Consumer Complaints Centre's (NCCC) annual reports. In 2016 alone, NCCC recorded RM16 million losses in relation to telco complaints. The highest numbers of complaints received are customer service complaints; second-highest are line/internet connection issues such as Adam's, with billing dispute and termination services also among the 5,681 complaints received in 2016. Other issues include charges from unsolicited SMSes which results in consumers paying more than what was initially intended. In addition, it is unacceptable that an unknown third party has access to consumers' phone numbers and charges them directly without obtaining prior consent. In 2017, Malaysia witnessed the largest data breach it had ever seen, with 46.2 million mobile subscribers' data being compromised and leaked. What has been done significantly to protect and deter this incident from happening again? Last year, a platform called SayaKenaHack.com was created to allow a subscriber to check if their personal data had been compromised. The platform highlighted the discovery of a breach within a breach, in which mobile numbers unknown to consumers were registered under their MyKad numbers. While the platform was blocked later due to personal data protection concerns, no other proper avenue similar to SayaKenaHack.com was created by authorities. The ministry and Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) must provide an avenue for subscribers to gain more information in relation to their subscription and exercise their right as consumers to address the issue. Malaysians today are more connected than ever, and in line with this growth, NCCC believes more avenues must be created, including effective policies and enforcement, to protect our consumers. SHABANA NASEER AHMAD is a senior manager for legal and policy matters with the National Consumer Complaints Centre (NCCC).