KUALA LUMPUR: The number of consumer complaints for the first nine months of this year has reached 30,000 cases with consumer losses of RM250mil so far.

Last year, a total of 34,381 complaints and consumer losses of RM244mil were recorded, said National Consumer Complaints Centre (NCCC) senior manager M. Matheevani.

She attributed this to higher awareness as well as more grievances recorded against industries where consumers suffered more losses.

&#65533;Last year, the communications and multimedia sector topped the list of complaints among consumers.

&#65533;But the trend is changing this year. The electricity and energy supply sector is expected to receive among the highest complaints, especially over faulty readings and alleged meter tampering incidents. It took 11th spot last year.
&#65533;Other sectors that are expected to make the &#65533;top 10&#65533; this year include services such as beauty and slimming programmes, communications and multimedia, banking, automobile and public transport,&#65533; she said at the sidelines of the Fifth Complaint Fest 2011 yesterday.

According to the NCCC 2010 annual report which was released yesterday, the communications and multimedia sector recorded 3,102 grievances last year on poor broadband and Internet services, including misrepresentation, poor customer service, as well as complaints against subscription television, including pricing and bill disputes and service disruption during bad weather.

This was followed by complaints on the quality of products and services, hire purchase, financial institutions, automobiles, public transport (train, buses and airlines), and housing.

NCCC chairman Datuk N. Marimuthu who presented the annual report, said a proper redress mechanism must be in place and quality of services and products enhanced.

&#65533;Last year, consumers suffered the biggest losses in the housing sector (RM102.95mil) followed by the automobile sector (RM89.76mil),&#65533; he said.

The report, which outlined recommendations for the various industries, listed numerous consumer complaints, including on abandoned housing projects, poor customer service, faulty automobile spare parts, unfair charges by financial institutions, abuse of credit cards, auto renewal of membership, misleading information and billing disputes.

NCCC chief executive officer Datuk Paul Selvaraj said industries should look at complaints on a positive note as it could help retain and increase its customer pool and repurchase behaviour once the problem was resolved.

